

THE AWARD-WINNING INDEPENDENT: EDITOR OF THE YEAR, CORRESPONDENT OF THE YEAR



THE INDEPENDENT

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RICHARD WILLIAMS: CRUNCH TIME FOR LENNOX LEWIS

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THE STRANGEST SHOW ON TELEVISION

BRIAN VINER, WEEKEND REVIEW



FRANCINE STOCK'S ADVENTURES IN MARRAKESH

TRAVEL, WEEKEND REVIEW

Straw to act over crisis on adoption

MINISTERS ARE to take a tough line over obstructive social workers who are blocking the chances for adoption of thousands of children in council-run homes. Although 55,000 children are in local authority care, the number of adoptions has slumped from 21,000 in the Seventies to just 2,000 a year.

Children growing up in council-run homes are much more likely than other young people to obtain no educational qualifications, become jobless, sleep rough or end up in prison. One in four teenage girls in care becomes pregnant, and surveys suggest their babies are 66 times more likely to end up in care than other children.

There is also a growing body of evidence that adopted children enjoy better life prospects, with 80 per cent of adoptions judged a success.

Now ministers want to end the anti-adoption culture. They blame social workers for being "anti-adoption" and using it as "an option of last resort".

Local authority leaders admit that the education of children in their charge has been neglected. One in four does not attend school regularly and the same percentage leave care with no qualifications in some areas. A recent survey suggested that four out of 10 authorities have no information about performance of pupils in care; two-thirds had no idea how they did in national tests.

The Independent has learnt that growing concern in the Government has persuaded the cabinet committee on the family, chaired by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, to launch

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

a full-scale review of adoption. In the short term, ministers will order councils to regard adoption as "a positive option". They will be forced to publish figures on the number of young people in care and the number of adoptions, allowing the Government



'It nearly split up our marriage' - One couple's battle against bureaucracy

to issue "league tables" of councils reluctant to help children to find a new family.

In the long term, the cabinet committee will consider drastic action against authorities which continue to shun adoptions without good reason. Privately, ministers say these could include handing control of adoption to a neighbouring authority, voluntary agency, or even a private company.

Mr Straw's group will consider the need for a new Adoption Act aimed at ending the delays in the current system.

As well as improving the life chances of problem children, ministers believe that more adoption would save money. It costs more than £1,100 a week to keep a child in care.

The Government is under pressure to act from an all-party group of MPs who have accused councils of being more concerned with "preserving their own empires" than the welfare of children. Julian Brazier, Tory MP for Canterbury and organiser of the group, said: "The figures are shocking. Children leaving care are 50 times more likely than their peers to go to prison, four times more likely to be unemployed, 60 times more likely to be homeless and 88 times more likely to be drug abusers. The provision of a loving home would reduce these problems considerably."

Frank Field, the former social security minister, said: "Adoption would mean a better life for most of these children. Local voters should ask councils why they need to keep such a large number of children in care."

John Ransford, head of social services at the Local Government Association, denied the charge of "empire building". He said: "The key issue is what is best for the child. In adoptions, you must make sure that you get the match right, or it can go disastrously wrong for the child and the family."

Mr Ransford conceded that councils had not given enough priority to the education of children in care. "Not enough effort has been put into improving their life chances," he said.

Leading article, Review, page 3

Yehudi Menuhin: 1916-1999



Lord Menuhin, who died yesterday, was 'one of the greatest musicians of his age'

Mykel Nicolaou

AT THE age of 12 he played the violin in a manner which made Einstein believe in god. At the age of 22 he was still conducting in concert halls across the world. Yehudi Menuhin died of a heart attack yesterday in hospital in Berlin, where he had travelled to conduct the Warsaw Symphony Orchestra.

Last night world leaders paid tribute to a man who was not only one of the most gifted violinists who ever lived but also a passionate campaigner for humanitarian causes and an educator whose school in Britain produced its own virtuosos.

He played his first public concert at the age of seven in the United States. Five years later, in Berlin, when Menuhin was just a few days short of his 13th birthday, Albert Einstein followed him backstage, hugged him and declared: "Now I know there is a god in Heaven!"

Menuhin was best known for definitive recordings of the

BY DAVID LESTER
Arts News Editor

uncle whose school in Britain produced its own virtuosos. He played his first public concert at the age of seven in the United States. Five years later, in Berlin, when Menuhin was just a few days short of his 13th birthday, Albert Einstein followed him backstage, hugged him and declared: "Now I know there is a god in Heaven!"

Menuhin was best known for definitive recordings of the

Beethoven and Elgar violin concertos. His longevity at the highest level is illustrated by a picture of the young violinist playing Elgar's concerto for the composer. More than once he introduced to the public works by famous composers. Bela Bartok, for instance, wrote the Sonata for Violin especially for him.

Menuhin lived in London with his second wife, the ballerina Diana Gould, with whom he had two sons. He received an honorary knighthood in 1965, but could not use the title until

he became a British citizen in 1985. He was ennobled in 1993. Just before Christmas he was promoting music teaching in British schools because he believed it could play a vital role in civilising society.

Tony Blair said yesterday: "Yehudi Menuhin... will be remembered the world over as one of the greatest musicians of his age."

Genius of the violin, page 3
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Manager of Lennox Lewis in tax inquiry

LENNOX LEWIS'S business manager is at the centre of inquiries into missing tax and national insurance contributions at a college set up by the boxer to help underprivileged children.

Panos Eliades will be with Lewis tonight in New York as he bids to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world. At home, however, the manager's running of the college is the subject of inquiries

BY HILARY CLARKE
AND STEVE BOGGAN

by the Inland Revenue, the Department of Social Security (DSS) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICA).

The Lennox Lewis College was opened in 1995 to help problem children in the East End of London, where Lewis was born. The boxer and Mr Eliades reportedly sank £1m

into the venture to help persistent criminal offenders, truants and children expelled from ordinary schools.

However, after three years of hand-to-mouth funding, the college closed last July and is now being used as a gym for professional adult boxers.

Mr Eliades, an accountant, is being investigated by the ICA after complaints from

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Poland	10.00
Spain	2.00 ES
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IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

"It seems quite extraordinary, since we are indeed now living at peace with our old friends the Argentinians, a magnificent, diverse people, that we should be making our pirate prince strut about embarrassingly and lay claim to the Malvinas."

AN Wilson on Prince Charles the Pirate

THE BEST-WRITTEN SUNDAY PAPER IN BRITAIN, FEATURING ALAIN DE BOTTON, SIMON SINGH, DAVID THOMSON, JEREMY CLARKE, ROY HATTERSLEY, BRIAN VINER, JOAN SMITH, GILBERT ADAIR, MICHAEL BYWATER, CAPTAIN MOONLIGHT AND WALLACE ARNOLD

Childless families: Couples who yearned for the chance to adopt describe the obstacles that were put in their way

Adoption process 'nearly destroyed us'

"IT NEARLY split up our marriage," is the stark verdict of one couple on the arduous, bruising nature of the adoption system. After five years of bad luck and battering against what seemed like an uncaring bureaucracy, they simply gave up.

"We just agreed that it would be the end," says Richard Titford, the vicar of Edwardstone near Sudbury in Suffolk. "It made us think we didn't want anything else. We had at least got each other, and thought we must just get on with being a childless couple."

In fact, having recovered from their ordeal, he and his wife Sarah decided to look for a child abroad and finally adopted their daughter Lucie from El Salvador eight years ago. But even then problems with the British authorities did not end. "I think there is something very deep-rooted in the British psyche about adoption, as though it is not really very proper," said Mr Titford, 53. "This shows itself in a dead hand that puts the mockers on everything, as if all the time the authorities are trying to make things difficult."

Their story is instructive, both in terms of the lengths to which couples are prepared to go to become parents and in the insensitivity that can be shown towards them.

Following unsuccessful treatment for infertility, the Titfords registered with a private adoption agency. All seemed to be going well until the agency folded, and they were referred to Redbridge social services. Immediately there developed problems between Mr Titford and the social worker assigned to them, which seemed to have something to do with his position as a clergyman and the suggestion that they would not be able to cope with the older child they would be likely to be assigned.

"It was just unreal," says Mrs Titford, 48. "She once asked him how he would feel if the child said 'F... off' at the breakfast table. She was just on

BY JOHN DAVISON

another planet, I think. She didn't seem to understand that we are just ordinary people."

They were also criticised for not ringing up enough to find out how things were going, which was seen as not being keen enough, and the final straw came when they forgot to take some paperwork to a meeting with the social worker. This apparently showed a profound lack of commitment.

"In the end it was sort of constructive dismissal. There was no way that we were going to be allowed to adopt a child through them so we left," says Mrs Titford. "Afterwards the social worker rang up to say that if Richard and I ever split up, she would be very interested in letting me adopt a child on my own. What an incredible thing to say."

Already at a very vulnerable stage in the process of trying to have children, they were left feeling wretched. "What's so terrible is that we are not an isolated case," says Mrs Titford. "We were made to feel no good and hopeless. It absolutely isn't right."

Once they had heard of the possibility of adopting Lucie, they waited nine months for the British authorities to come up with the necessary entry papers. But by the time that they had become legal parents of the child under El Salvador law, there was still no movement, so Mrs Titford went out anyway.

Once there she went for help to the British Embassy and was horrified by the attitude of a sympathetic customs official, and the procedure to adopt Lucie under British law went ahead unimpeded.

The attitudes they encountered on the way, however, can translate directly into suffering for children in care. Delays in the system mean that children can spend years being damaged in a series of residential or foster homes when a permanent family could have been found.

Research by the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) shows huge variations in the practices of different local authorities. While some place 10 per cent of eligible children in adoption families every year, for others the figure is as low as 0.5 per cent. The organisation is pushing for



Richard and Sarah Titford with their adopted daughter Lucie; the Titfords were forced to seek a child abroad after they ran into problems with the British adoption system

changes in legislation to ease the process, and for the establishment of national standards.

"Robert", now six years old, is a typically sad example of the situation. He was placed on the "at risk" register at birth due to concerns for his elder sister. But it is only now that the two children have finally been offered for adoption.

"They have already been in

care five times in their little lives," says Caroline Vandenberg, 42, from south London, who has been fostering children with her husband for 10 years and who looked after the brother and sister herself.

"By the age of six you have already produced such insecurity," says Mrs Vandenberg. "He used to scratch himself raw to attract attention, and in five

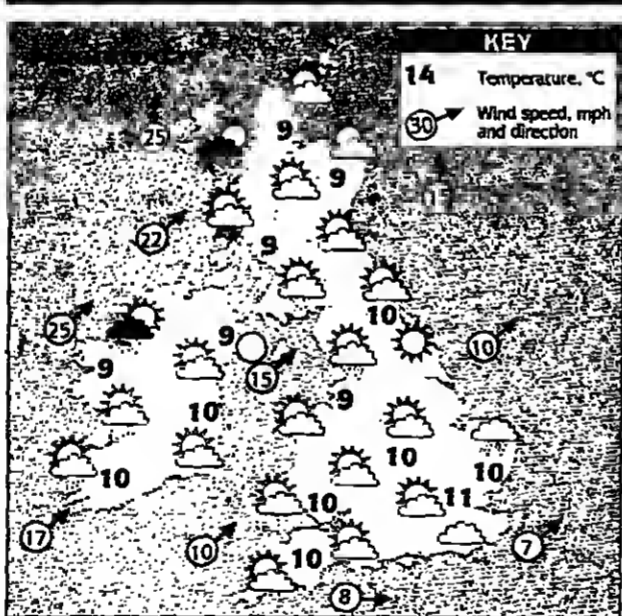
years' time he could be slashing his wrists."

There are also sleeping disorders and anti-social behaviour so that he has no friends at school.

They had been to four different schools already, each time forming and breaking bonds with their teachers, eventually unwilling to make any attachments because they

know they will always have to move on. "They never find an adult that isn't going to betray them, until they find these magic adopters," says Mrs Vandenberg, who has just adopted two of her former foster charges to join her own two children. They then have to spend years trying to undo all the damage that has been done to them along the way."

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST

General situation: Easternmost counties of England may have early showers rain, but this should clear this morning to leave a mainly dry afternoon with plenty of sunshine. The rest of England and Wales will be largely dry with long spells of sunshine, although one or two showers may break out over the hills. Northern Ireland will be breezy with sunny spells and some showers. Eastern Scotland will be mainly dry with some sun, but the rest of Scotland will be at risk from showers.

London, SE England, E Anglia, E England: Showery rain this morning, but it will become dry by the afternoon with some lengthy sunny periods. A light south-westerly wind. Max temp 10-12C (50-54F).

Channel Is, West S England, Midlands, East N & NE England: Any overnight showers will die out to leave some decent sunny spells. A light westerly wind. Max temp 9-11C (48-52F).

SW & NW England, Wales, Lake Dist, Isle of Man: There may be an isolated shower across the hills but most places will enjoy dry with plenty of sunny spells. A light south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-9C (45-50F).

Wales & SW Scotland, Glasgow, W Isles: The south will have sunny spells but showers in the north-west will extend southwards by afternoon. A moderate to fresh south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-9C (45-48F).

SE Scotland, Aberdeen, N Isles: Some sunshine at first, but an increasing risk of showers. A fresh south to south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-10C (45-50F).

W & SW Scotland, Glasgow, W Isles: The south will have sunny spells but showers in the north-west will extend southwards by afternoon. A moderate to fresh south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-9C (45-48F).

N Ireland: Showers in the north and west but mainly dry with sunny spells elsewhere. A moderate south-westerly wind. Max temp 9-11C (48-52F).

OUTLOOK

Early mist and fog will clear to leave most of the UK dry and mild with lengthy sunny periods tomorrow. However, rain will edge into Northern Ireland and western Scotland later. Monday will continue mild and mainly bright, but the north and west will have some rain.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Great Ouse Roundabout, Leytonstone. Major roadworks on new M11 link road. Until 01st December. Co-Author: A1 Kingsway, Dunmurry, Roadworks, various lane restrictions. Until 1st August.

Derbyshire: A8 Between Derby Southern Bypass (A50) and Sheriff Road roundabout. East of Avon, Contractor for work on new A50. Until 15th October.

AA Roadworks Call 0338 461777 for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

Gloucestershire: A40 Llanidloes Rd,

LIGHTING UP

Location	6.23pm	6.42am
Belfast	6.07pm	6.25am
Birmingham	6.11pm	6.28am
Bristol	6.15pm	6.35am
London	6.01pm	6.18am
Manchester	6.08pm	6.27am
Newcastle	6.05pm	6.25am

HIGH TIDES

Location	AM	HT	PM	HT
Portsmouth	3.04	9.5	3.42	10.0
Cardiff	1.39	3.5	2.13	3.4
Dover	1.34	4.6	2.20	4.3
Dunfermline	2.32	5.1	8.08	5.4
East Loughmole	6.18	3.3	8.58	3.6
Falmouth	1.05	4.2	1.51	4.1
Glasgow	9.17	2.6	9.27	2.5
Harwich	8.09	3.0	8.36	3.0
Holyhead	7.00	4.4	7.44	4.5
Hull (Albert Dock)	2.34	6.9	2.58	7.1
King's Lynn	1.02	4.5	3.21	4.8
Lisbon	10.59	4.3	11.51	4.4
Liverpool	7.39	7.3	8.18	7.4
London	6.18	5.0	6.58	5.1
Newquay	1.29	5.1	2.09	5.2
Portland	2.38	1.1	3.48	1.2
Portsmouth	9.17	3.6	9.40	3.8
Swansea	4.37	3.2	5.11	3.3
Scarborough	12.28	4.3	12.57	4.4
Widnes	1.40	1.8	5.32	2.8

AIR QUALITY

Location	NO ₂	SO ₂	PM ₁₀
London	Mod	Good	Good
S. England	Mod	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good	Good
C. England	Mod	Good	Good
N. England	Mod	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good	Good
N. Ireland	Good	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises: 05:20
Sun sets: 18:01
Moon rises: 04:03
Moon sets: 12:35
New Moon: March 17th

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecasts dial 0951 5009 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met. Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

YESTERDAY

Location	Warms	Coldest	Winds	Max	Min
Warms: Crawley 15C (59F)					
Coldest (day): Lochboisdale 5C (43F)					
Winds: Eskdale 6.0 mm					
Sealeaks: Ulster 6.2 hrs					
For 24hrs to 2pm Friday					

RAIN OR SHINE

POPOCATEPETL, the volcano near Mexico City, is spouting ash, vapour and red-hot rock, civil defence authorities in the region said yesterday.

At least one explosion erupted from the mountain yesterday, and although incandescent rock fell on the upper slopes of Popocatepetl - Aztec for "smoking mountain" - the National Centre for Disaster Prevention said there were no reports of ash falling on nearby communities.



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Thank you.

Glenn Ball



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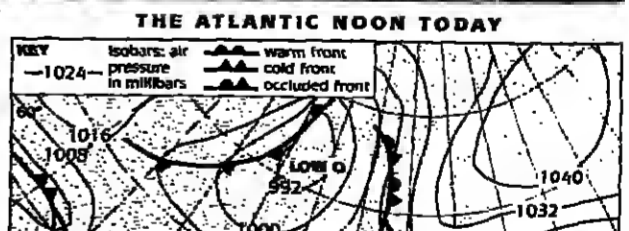
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THE WORLD



THE ATLANTIC NOON TODAY



THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Adelaide	1 21 70	Chicago	1 16 57	Kuala Lumpur	30 06 05	Port Stanley	1 17 31
Algeria	1 15 59	Gibraltar	1 19 66	La Paz	1 10 50	Prague	3 4 39
Amman	1 15 59	Cologne	1 13 95	Lima	34 93 93	Qatar	3 7 27
Ankara	1 15 59	Coverington	3 37 18	London	20 87 87	Rangoon	3 52 90
Antananarivo	1 14 50	Curtis	1 16 61	Los Angeles	11 52 12	Riyadh	2 18 61
Athens	1 17 63	Dakar	21 70 70	Madrid	1 11 52	Rome	2 16 61
Auckland	1 23 79	Dar es Salaam	1 19 55	Makassar	18 64 64	Sao Paulo	1 13 52
Bahia	1 26 79	Durham	28 93 93	Málaga	17 63 63	Seoul	3 58 82
Baku	1 26 79	Detroit	10 50 50	Mannila	1 32 90	Singapore	30 50 50
Bangkok	3 24 99	Doha	3 27 79	Mexico City	34 93 93	Sofia	30 86 86
Barcelona	1 15 59	Edinburgh	3 16 57	Mogadishu	29 84 84	Stockholm	1 11 52
Bombay	1 19 66	Faro	1 14 57	Moscow	24 74 74	Sydney	1 27 81
Buenos Aires	1 11 52	Frankfurt	1 14 56	Mumbai	1 24 75	Taipei	3 37 37
Cairo	3 37 37	Glasgow	1 10 66	Nairobi	16 57 57	Tokyo	1 26 79
Cardiff	1 19 66	Geneva	1 13 63	Washington	3 19 19	Toronto	2 23 73
Chengdu	1 17 63	Hannover	21 70 70	Wellington	1 25 75	Ulaanbaatar	2 29 66
Chongqing	21 70 70	Heidelberg	25 77 77	Winnipeg	1 24 74	Yokohama	1 26 79
Cincinnati	1 15 59	Hong Kong	1 42 57	Xinjiang	24 75 75		
Columbus	1 13 56	Houston	1 10 66	Hanoi	18 64 64		
Dakar	1 23 79	Indanagar	12 54 54	Harbin	28 79 79		
Damascus	1 14 50	Jakarta	33 91 91	Hong Kong	1 42 57		
Dar es Salaam	1 19 66	Johannesburg	30 86 86	Los Angeles	11 52 12		
Dhaka	23 72 72	Kobe	25 77 77	Mannila	18 64 64		
Doha	3 24 99	Kuala Lumpur	32 90 90	Moscow	24 74 74		
Durham	1 28 82	La Paz	25 77 77	Nairobi	16 57 57		
Edinburgh	1 16 57	London	20 87 87	Seoul	3 58 82		
El Salvador	1 28 82	Madrid	1 11 52	Singapore	30 50 50		
Enschede	1 13 52	Makassar	18 64 64	Sofia	30 86 86		
Frankfurt	1 14 56	Mannila	1 32 90	Stockholm	1 11 52		
Gaborone	1 19 66	Mexico City	34 93 93	Sydney	1 27 81		
Geneva	1 13 63	Mogadishu	29 84 84	Taipei	3 37 37		
Glasgow	1 10 66	Moscow	24 74 74	Tokyo	1 26 79		
Hannover	25 77 77	Mumbai	1 24 75	Toronto	2 23 73		
Heidelberg	1 42 57	Nairobi	16 57 57	Ulaanbaatar	2 29 66		
Hong Kong	1 42 57	Seoul	3 58 82	Yokohama	1 26 79		
Houston	1 10 66	Singapore	30 50 50				
Indanagar	12 54 54	Sofia	30 86 86				
Jakarta	33 91 91	Stockholm	1 11 52				
Johannesburg	30 86 86	Sydney	1 27 81				
Kobe	25 77 77	Taipei	3 37 37				
Kuala Lumpur	32 90 90	Tokyo	1 26 79				
La Paz	25 77 77	Toronto	2 23 73				
London	20 87 87	Ulaanbaatar	2 29 66				
Los Angeles	11 52 12	Yokohama	1 26 79				
Mannila	1 32 90						
Mexico City	34 93 93						
Mogadishu	29 84 84						
Moscow	24 74 74						
Mumbai	1 24 75						
Nairobi	16 57 57						
Seoul	3 58 82						
Singapore	30 50 50						
Sofia	30 86 86						
Stockholm	1 11 52						
Sydney	1 27 81						
Taipei	3 37 37						
Tokyo	1 26 79						
Toronto	2 23 73						
Ulaanbaatar	2 29 66						
Yokohama	1 26 79						

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 13 March 1999

Genius who spread his gift to youth of the world

TO UNDERSTAND Yehudi Menuhin's love of music and his legacy, one has only to look at next month's concert programme at Birmingham's Symphony Hall.

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

Lord Menuhin was due to conduct three concerts there. Called, all too ironically, "My Life in Music: Reflections on an Unfinished Journey", the series was also to be introduced by him. The man who loved to communicate his own passion for music was to give a talk to the audiences reminiscing about his life, recalling the musicians he had known and discussing the music itself.

But even more pertinently, each concert would have featured music for the violin played under his baton by artists he had nominated and whose career he had influenced - from the 12-year-old protégé Nicola Benedetti to Rainer Kuchl, leader of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

Lord Menuhin leaves a legacy for young musicians - a structure of music education that has already produced the British virtuosos Nigel Kennedy and Tasmin Little.

It was 30 years ago that he founded his school in Surrey to provide tuition for musically gifted children from all over the world. He set up the school because he was conscious of the difficulties that children faced when studying music while attending a normal school. He also ensured there were scholarships and "aided places".

Menuhin was born in April 1916, in New York, of Russian-Jewish parents. He astonished a San Francisco audience at the age of seven with a debut violin performance. It was at his first concert in Berlin, just a few days short of his 13th birthday, that Albert Einstein followed Menuhin backstage, hugged him and declared: "Now I know there is a God in heaven!"

Menuhin lived in central London with his second wife, the ballerina Diana Gould, with whom he had two sons.

He received an honorary knighthood in 1965, but could not use the title until he became a British citizen in 1985. He became a lord in 1993.

His first marriage, in 1938, was to Nola Nicholas, the 19-year-old daughter of an Aus-

tralian millionaire. In the late 1940s, Menuhin defied personal attacks to play for the Germans in Berlin. He did so, he said, to further tolerance and "the brotherhood of man".

His classical works were received rapturously wherever he went. But he was not afraid to experiment with different repertoires, playing with artists from the sitar master, Ravi Shankar, to the virtuoso jazz violinist Stéphane Grappelli.

More than once he introduced to the public works by famous composers. Bela Bartok, for instance, wrote *Sonata for Violin* especially for him. His listening tastes, likewise, were not confined to the highbrow. He was an admirer of the early Beatles music, but was knocked off-balance by a Rolling Stones concert. "I am no longer sure music is a universal language," he said sadly, complaining the music was devoid of subtlety, variety and intellect.

Deeply spiritual, Menuhin was a follower of Indian mysticism, which influenced both the way he lived and the way he viewed death. His own wishes for the way this passage should be marked "are based on the idea of a happy picnic on a river bank. My preference is for whatever will reunite me most quickly with the sources of life, accompanied by folk music and dance... Back to the earth, under a tree, or in a river, that is what I choose".

He was a devotee of yoga. Yesterday Ewen Bailour, a former official with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, of which Menuhin was president, recalled that he used to plan Menuhin's daily timetable with the violinist beside him in a headstand posture.

Just before Christmas, Menuhin was promoting music teaching in schools in Britain, stressing that it could play a vital role in civilising society. "Art reflects the refinement of a civilisation," he said. "Music goes both ways. You make yourself heard and listen to others."

Sir Colin Davis, principal conductor with the London Symphony Orchestra, concurred him playing both the Beethoven and Elgar violin con-



Menuhin teaching a young Nigel Kennedy in 1964. Musical education was a passion in which he invested both considerable time and money

Hulton Getty



With Sir Edward Elgar in 1932 after recording Elgar's violin concerto in London

EMI/Fox

certos. He said yesterday: "He will be remembered with great affection by young musicians. He has done an enormous amount for music education and put a lot of money into it."

"I had the good fortune to work with Yehudi when I was a young man. I remember most clearly the Beethoven violin concerto. Nobody has played it like that since. He had this poise. And he would submerge himself entirely in the music. He seemed to be able to eliminate his ego in all respects."

Humphrey Burton, a former head of music for BBC television who is writing a biography

of Lord Menuhin, knew him for 40 years and described him as the world's greatest violinist. "He was also a remarkable conductor and musicians loved working with him. The music flowed through him."

"The last thing he did was dictate letters from his hospital bed on Tuesday and the last was to Gordon Brown congratulating him on his Budget."

The Secretary of State for Culture, Chris Smith, said: "Yehudi Menuhin used his genius for music as a force for good to forge links across the globe... We are honoured he adopted British citizenship."

First violin to the nation

I WENT TO THE Yehudi Menuhin School when I was eight. Nigel Kennedy was the top boy in the school. He was 16 and used to tweak my hair and give me affectionate nicknames.

I auditioned in front of Yehudi and I remember thinking what a nice face he had. I also remember the first time he visited the school when I was there.

I thought he would be in an expensive suit with a bow tie and looking impressive and imposing. When he came he was wearing an old cardigan and a pair of very ordinary trousers and was very small.

Yehudi could put the pupils at their ease completely. Whenever he came to the school he would hear every violinist. When I was 16 I was studying



TASMIN LITTLE

Bach's *Chaconne*. He took my violin and he played this most wonderful music on it. And when I was 17 I needed to raise £5,000 to buy a violin. I mentioned this to him and the next day he sent me a letter of recommendation I could use.

The school has come in for criticism as a hothouse that breeds the mentality of a soloist.

But nothing could be further

from the truth or the ethos of the school. Playing chamber music together was absolutely central.

In the last couple of years I've seen more of Yehudi than ever before. He was a fantastic dinner companion. I remember a dinner in Warsaw.

He chose and drank excellent wines but ate very sparingly, vegetables and pulses, and regaled us with wonderful stories. Then he turned to my husband, Michael Hatch, a recording engineer, and started talking to him about computers and digital developments.

Yehudi seemed to be the master of everything.

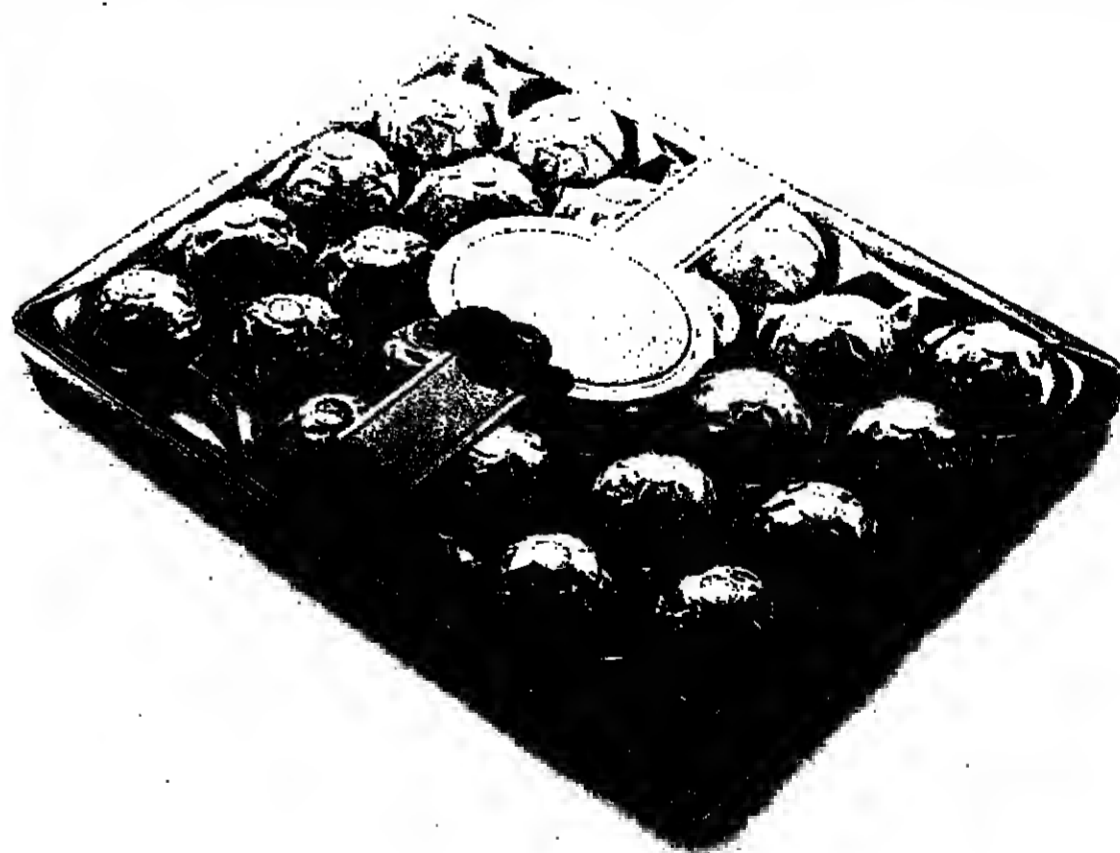
"On the way home on the aeroplane he started writing on an airline sick bag, of all things.

I asked him what he was writing and he said: 'Oh, it's just my ideas for a solution to the Northern Ireland crisis. Women are the solution; they will sort it out,' he said. He wanted the wives of people who had been killed to band together."

I will remember him for his incredible expressiveness and depth of emotion. He expressed a lot of love in his playing. Audiences loved the human side of his playing and even, as he got older, the fallibility.

He was one of the best violinists that ever lived and one of the most profound musicians. But he was also an educator, an ambassador and a diplomat for music.

The violinist Tasmin Little, was talking to David Lister



14TH MARCH.

GO ON, SPOIL HER ON MOTHER'S DAY.



Hunt for missing Lewis cash

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

three former teachers at the school who were made redundant only to find they could not claim benefits because their National Insurance contributions and income tax payments - which had been deducted from their wages at the college - had not been passed on to the authorities.

The institute confirmed yesterday that it was "actively investigating" Mr Eliades. Correspondence seen by *The Independent* shows that he is rejecting allegations of professional misconduct.

The college was run by Team Solo Ltd, of which Mr Eliades was the sole director. However, once the ICA began looking into the lecturers' complaints, Mr Eliades told the institute's investigator, Nigel Howell, that the college's staff were actually employed by another company - Team Solo Management Ltd - which was supposed to pay their salaries.

Bank records show that



Panos Eliades 'too busy' to comment on allegations

salaries for the 16 staff were indeed transferred from an account at Barclays in the name of Team Solo Management Ltd. Responsibility for wages rested with that company, said Mr Eliades, and he was not a shareholder in it. But the address to which bank statements for Team Solo Management were sent was: "Panos Eliades Ltd, 6 Bloomsbury Square, London."

Mr Panos told the ICA: "I have been unable to locate any paperwork relating to payment of monies to the Inland Revenue." Exactly how much money has gone astray is not known. The DSS has confirmed that a specialist unit is trying to locate the contributions made by staff. Kevin Grice, 43, the former deputy principal of the college, is one of three teachers who

won claims for unfair dismissal after being made redundant a year ago. He said: "At least five of the nine teachers have experienced similar problems with their tax and National Insurance contributions."

The college taught vocational subjects such as plumbing and music technology. Lewis, 33, who had himself been excluded from primary school, had little hands-on involvement.

Team Solo Management Ltd was wound up last June, while Mr Eliades' sports promotion company, Panix Promotions Ltd, which was underwriting the operation with Lewis, was running a £666,000 deficit, according to accounts for 1998.

Panix's auditors, Lee Christian & Co, refused to pass these accounts because they felt Mr Eliades, an accountant, had not given them enough information.

A spokeswoman at Panos Eliades, Franklin & Co, Mr Eliades' insolvency practice, said that many false allegations had been made but he was "too busy" in New York to comment.

Bulger killers to launch appeal

LAWYERS ACTING for the schoolboy killers of James Bulger have won a significant victory in their efforts to have the convictions overturned after complaining that the trial of the two boys was a breach of their human rights.

A ruling by the European Commission for Human Rights in Strasbourg, to be made public next week, will allow Robert Thompson and Jon Venables - now both 17 - leave to appeal against their convictions.

The case will then be considered by the European Court of Human Rights, the highest court in Europe.

If judges rule the boys' human rights have been breached they could move that the whole trial was unlawful. Although the UK government has powers to derogate rulings of the court, it would find it difficult not to accept such a ruling, which would mean that the law would have to change in regard to juveniles being tried in adult courts.

The two boys' solicitors have always argued that their trial was "degrading and inhumane" because it was held in an adult court. They also claimed the 15-year sentences imposed on Thompson and Venables by the then home secretary, Michael Howard, were illegal. The law lords ruled in June 1997 that Mr Howard acted unlawfully.

A detailed report on the case, which will be published on Monday, will be considered by a 19-strong panel of judges. It may be two or three years before a decision is made.

James was two years old when he was abducted from the Strand Shopping Centre in Bootle, Merseyside, on 12 February 1993. His body was discovered two days later on a railway line in nearby Walton. He had been

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

repeatedly beaten. Thompson and Venables, who were just 10 years old at the time, were arrested days later. They were convicted of James's murder after a three-week trial at Preston Crown Court in November 1983.

Both boys have been detained at secure accommodation ever since.

Thompson's solicitor, Dominic Lloyd, said yesterday he was unable to comment on the case until Monday. No one was available for comment from Venables' defence team.

At her home in Kirkby, Merseyside, James Bulger's mother, Denise Fergus, criticised the decision to allow the boys' legal challenge.

Mrs Fergus, 31, who has two children, Michael, four, and Thomas, one, married Stuart Fergus last September, after divorcing James's father Ralph Bulger. She said: "No one should forget the vile and monstrous crimes these two committed when they abducted James and killed him. They murdered him in the most horrific and despicable way imaginable, and they cannot deny that."

"Nothing can bring James back and nothing can wipe out what they did. To say they were degraded, or that their trial was inhumane, is ridiculous."

"All this legal wrangling is sickening. They are trying to get off on technicalities and it is time the British legal system and the Government stood up to Europe on this."

Rex Makin, Ralph Bulger's lawyer, said: "Every time there is movement in this case it is a re-activation of the wound and the grief that Ralph suffers from the loss of his child."



Kate Buckell, a member of the Alliance for Workers' Liberty and the probable next president of the NUS

Far left set to win NUS

A HARD LEFT candidate is set to win the presidency of the three million-strong National Union of Students next week, ending 16 years of Labour control. Kate Buckell, a member of the Alliance for Workers' Liberty, is the favourite to take the post when elections are held at the union's annual conference in Blackpool on Tuesday.

Ms Buckell is standing on the ticket of the Campaign for Free Education, a group that has been described by Labour's Millbank headquarters as a

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

"front organisation" for various far-left factions. The 25-year-old former Lancaster University student, came within 15 votes of winning the presidency from Labour last year, but is expected to beat Labour's Andrew Pakes this year.

In a sign that the Labour Party nationally is nervous of a left-wing victory, party officials have begun briefing against Ms Buckell in recent days.

In her manifesto, Ms Buckell states that she wants "a strategy of direct action and non-payment" to smash the Government's system of forcing students to take out loans for tuition fees. The Campaign for Free Education has so far organised sit-ins and occupations in several colleges and universities across the country and Labour sources claim that it is intent on a campaign of disruption of campuses.

A Millbank source said: "This woman is a danger to the

future of the NUS because it will lose all credibility if it hurls to the left, like trade unions in the Eighties."

However, Mick Duncan, of the CFE, said that Ms Buckell's election would be a "disaster" for Labour and a boost for most students, who had endured 16 years of the party's acquiescence to cuts in student grants. "It would be a disaster for Tony Blair and David Blunkett who would have students accept tuition fees. Students are sick of years of cuts," he said.

Tourist wins £1.2m for pub accident

A DUTCH tourist whose hopes of a brilliant career ended after she suffered brain damage when a pub menu blackboard fell on to her head, won £1.2m damages in the High Court yesterday.

Tessel van Oudenhoven's intellect was perfectly preserved and she appeared to be perfectly normal, said Mr Justice Wright. But her cognitive function had been subtly disturbed, so she was now operating at a far less effective level than before the accident, which happened in the Rugby Tavern, Great James Street, London, in 1991. The civil engineer, who has not worked since 1996, had complete insight into her disability and could compare it with how she was before. "As a result, very understandably, she is angry, frustrated and distressed, and I think is undoubtedly very obsessive about what she perceives she has lost," the judge said.

Her emotional state undoubtedly aggravated the neck and back pain from which she suffered from time to time, and her balancing mechanism. "The brain injury itself, although no more than at the lower end of moderate in severity, has nevertheless had a disproportionate impact upon her cognitive abilities and consequently a catastrophic effect upon her career and earnings prospects."

The damages with costs were awarded against Griffin Inns Ltd, of Chiswick, west London, which had admitted liability but contested the amount of damages. Lawyers for the company had alleged Miss Van Oudenhoven, 31, who lives in Amsterdam, had exaggerated the consequences of her injury, which they dismissed as a minor laceration to her scalp. The judge said the view the company's lawyers took of the incident was indicated by the fact that their admitted figure for special damages was limited to £10 - representing the cost of taxi fares back from the casualty department at St Bartholomew's.

BY JAN COLLEY

Hospital on the night of the accident.

Miss Van Oudenhoven was a top student at the Technical University of Delft when, for an unexplained reason, the "substantial piece of timber" fell 18in and struck her edge-on, said the judge. Her professor described her as a "brilliant and active student". But after her return to Holland she appeared withdrawn, apathetic, confused and unclear in her speech. Her graduation was delayed by a year but she still qualified with distinction.

Her ambition was to work in management in one of the major multi-nationals but, in view of her own perceived difficulties, she lowered her sights and obtained a job as a project engineer with a Dutch consultant engineering firm.

Three years later, in 1996, after a 10-month assignment in Colombia, Miss Van Oudenhoven was exhausted and described herself as a "complete mess". She resigned because she was not coping with the level of endurance required for the job and had not met the high levels expected by her employers.

She had not worked since, although she had made strenuous efforts to discover what was wrong with her and obtain appropriate treatment.

Dismissing the allegation of fabrication, the judge said he could not accept that this highly intelligent and successful graduate would have so exaggerated the consequences of her accident as to give up her chances of obtaining the work she wanted in order to inflate her claim for damages.

"I am satisfied that the general level of her complaints, particularly about her cognitive disabilities, is genuine."

The judge awarded Miss Van Oudenhoven £35,000, plus interest, for pain, suffering and loss of amenity and around £200,000 for loss of earnings so far. The bulk of the award was made up of compensation for future loss of earnings.

Menson killing: man charged with murder and conspiracy

AN UNEMPLOYED man, aged 25, appeared in court yesterday charged with the murder of the black musician Michael Menson.

Mario Pereira, of Edmonton, north London, a British national of Mauritian origin, was also charged with conspiring to pervert the cause of justice. He was remanded in custody to reappear in court later this month.

Mr Menson, 30, was set alight in a street in Edmonton in January 1997. He died two weeks later.

Police initially believed Mr Menson, who had a history of psychiatric illness, had set fire to himself and only reinvestigated the case after cam-

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

paigning by the family and friends of the dead man.

Mr Pereira yesterday appeared before Enfield magistrates in north London, where he will next appear on 18 March.

During the hour-long hearing, attended by five of Mr Menson's brothers and sisters, the defendant spoke only to confirm his name.

Mr Pereira is charged with the murder of Mr Menson on or before 13 February 1997, and also with conspiring to pervert the course of justice on or before 9 March 1999.

Reporting restrictions re-



Menson: Set alight

main in force and no application for legal aid was made.

Two other men, aged 50 and

26, who were arrested on Tuesday by officers from the Metropolitan Police's racial and violent crime task force, remain in custody.

Scotland Yard were yesterday granted an extension to hold the men who will undergo further questioning. When that permission expires, police must either charge the men, release them, or obtain a further extension from a magistrate.

Mr Menson was the son of a Ghanaian diplomat, and was born in Moscow. As a child he lived in several countries.

He was a member of the band Double Trouble which had a series of top 10 hits in the late Eighties. The band broke up in 1993.

IN BRIEF

226 prisoners still on the run

MORE THAN 1,500 inmates absconded from open prisons in the past two years and 226 are still at large, the Home Office admitted yesterday. While on the run, they committed 291 crimes, including 12 assaults, 14 drugs offences, and two attempted rapes or rapes.

Murder investigation goes to dogs

DETECTIVES INVESTIGATING the murders of a dog breeder and her mother will today visit the Crufts dog show in Birmingham in the search for clues. Janice Sheridan, 45, and her mother Connie, 79, were found stabbed to death at their home in Upwell, Norfolk, two months ago.

Fish could face sunburn peril

OZONE-LAYER thinning could lead to fish suffering sunburn symptoms. Plymouth's Marine Laboratory simulated levels of extra solar radiation expected over the next 50 years. Lighter-coloured and flat fish were likely to have flaky skin and be more disease-prone.

Falklands reporter dies, aged 47

FORMER ITN reporter Jeremy Hands, best known for his coverage of the Falklands War, has died suddenly in hospital after being taken ill. The cause of death is as yet unknown. Mr Hands, 47, lived in Norfolk with his second wife. He had two children from his first marriage.

Cinema admissions fall 17 per cent

CINEMAS HAVE suffered a fall in popularity, according to figures released yesterday. Admissions dropped by more than 17 per cent in the final quarter of last year compared with 1997. Figures released by the Office for National Statistics showed a drop from 31.3 million to 26.2 million.

Clinics hunt sperm donors in snooker hall

FERTILITY CLINICS in Bristol faced with a decline in sperm donors sensibly decided to target sportsmen as volunteers. Athletic, energetic, they would be the very image of virility.

The clinic's first hunting-ground? Snooker clubs.

The decline in the number of people willing to produce "a gift of life" for Bristol University's Centre for Reproductive Medicine has reached crisis levels, said senior seminologist Joanna Day. The centre is down to its last four donors.

It needs 20 to satisfy demand from the 300 couples a year who seek help to start a family.

"We are approaching crisis point and really need men to help out. We are having to rely on frozen samples given years ago," she said. "As snooker clubs are dominated by men, it seemed a good idea to target

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

them with leaflets." Next to darts, it is perhaps hard to imagine a group less likely to prove a woman's procreative dream. Next to the genetic charms of David Gilmour, or Linford Christie, budding "Hurricane" Higginses, complete with fag and whisky chaser, might find demand for their gametes slow. But a spokesman for Riley's Snooker Club in Bristol said: "We have a pile of leaflets going fast. Lots of regular players are laughing, but then they pocket them and take them home. I think it is a fantastic idea."

Ms Day said next on the target list would be rugby, football and tennis players. Sumo wrestling and darts are as yet unmentioned.

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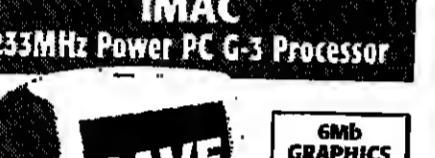
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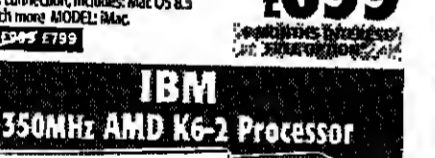
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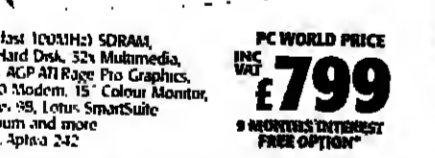
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Students believe Pill can stop Aids

MORE THAN a quarter of secondary school children think the contraceptive pill will protect them from sexually transmitted diseases. The same number think that having a steady partner will have the same effect.

New research by the Health Education Authority reveals big gaps in teenagers' knowledge about sex. One in six 15-year-olds boys say they have heard of "gonorrhea", a non-existent sexually transmitted disease made up by researchers.

But fewer have heard of chlamydia, a real disease that can make women infertile.

Ministers are reconsidering sex education as part of a wide-ranging review of the curriculum, which includes citizenship, moral and spiritual values and the arts, as well as academic subjects. The results are expected to be announced next month.

The latest research into young people's attitudes and behaviour, Young People and Health, was carried out among 10,497 11 to 16-year-olds in 70 English secondary schools. They were questioned about school, family life, smoking, drinking, drug-taking and sexual health.

Although three-quarters of children like school, bullying is widespread. Half of all children have been bullied at school at some time and one in five said they had been the victims of bullying during the current term.

Children who are bullied tend to bully others - about 40 per cent of the victims admit-

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

ted they were also bullies. Sixteen per cent have been made fun of because of their race and religion.

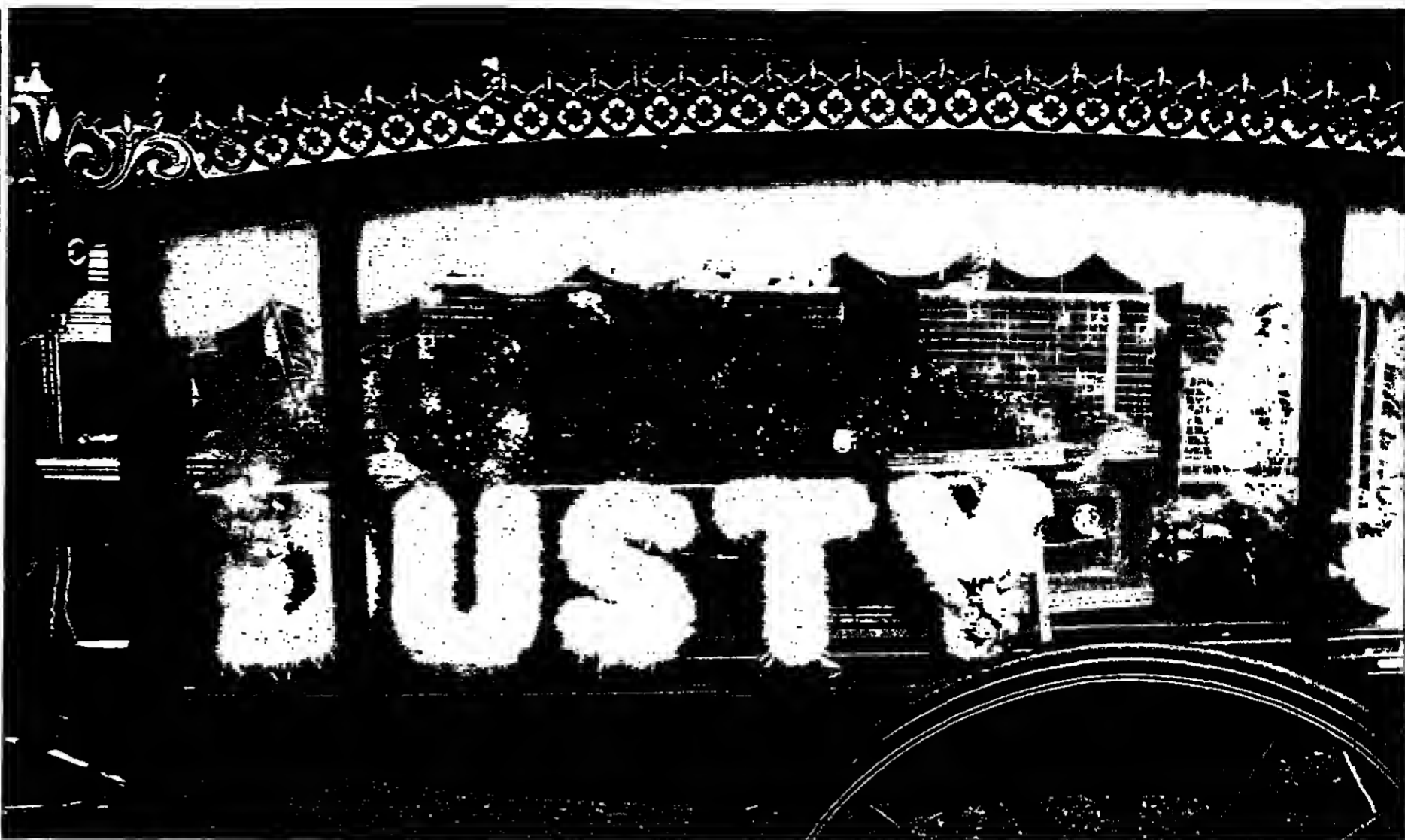
When they were questioned about sex education, nearly all recalled lessons about the development of the body, sexual relationships, contraception and birth control.

However, teenagers would like more information about homosexuality and lesbianism. Fifteen and 16-year-olds would also like more information about Aids. More teenagers - 92 per cent - know about HIV/Aids than other sexually transmitted diseases, the survey shows.

Only 39 per cent have heard of gonorrhoea, 33 per cent of syphilis and 51 per cent of herpes. Reports of gonorrhoea among 16 to 19-year-olds rose 46 per cent between 1995 and 1997. For chlamydia, the figure was 56 per cent. Nine out of 10 young people had heard of the condom and the contraceptive pill.

Neither drug taking nor drinking appears to be increasing. Both are at about the same level as they were three years ago. Alcoholics are growing in popularity. Twenty per cent do not drink at all and three-fifths drink only a little. Five per cent of children are already drinking at the age of 11, compared with nearly half of 16-year-olds.

Children who dislike school are more likely to take risks with their health such as smoking, drinking and taking drugs.



Around 500 Dusty Springfield fans heard her hit 'You Don't Have to Say You Love Me' play as the singer's coffin arrived for her funeral in Henley Peter Macdiarmid

Hundreds flock to say they loved her

NEIL TENNANT, of the Pet Shop Boys, reached into another era yesterday for the adjective which summed up precisely what made Dusty Springfield special. "Dusty was special," he said, "because Dusty was fab." Laughter rippled through St Mary's Church in Henley-on-Thames at the funeral of the first female soul singer Britain ever produced who, with her beehive hair and panda eyes, personified "fabness".

The Pet Shop Boys are credited with resurrecting Dusty's career by recording with her in the late 1980s, years after she had dropped out of the charts, and the nation's consciousness. But yesterday Mr Tennant, in a moving and very funny tribute, made clear that the privilege had been all theirs.

When they decided to ask Dusty to record with them, the duo was warned that the singer who had battled against drugs and booze was "difficult". There were gloomy predictions that she might not even turn up at the recording studio. But when the day came, there was Dusty, all in black leather, a very punctual, "mid-Eighties diva".

The icon, he said, had turned out to be shy, "sweet and kind and a bit nutty". But, Mr Tennant said, when Dusty sang he knew he was "in the presence of greatness". The funeral was an oddity, intimate, of the people sort of affair. A crowd of 500 people gathered outside to listen to the funeral service relayed on speakers murmured agreement when Mr Tennant said Dusty would have been moved to know what she had meant to people.

Dusty, who loved studio technology would have approved of the state of the art PA system which belted out her hits across Henley's ancient town centre. Apart from the Pet Shop Boys and Elvis Costello, the celebrities in attendance were mainly from the era when

Dusty was a regular fixture at the top of the charts: Lulu in dark sunglasses, Madeline Bell of Blue Mink, Kiki Dee. The coffin had arrived to the strains of "You Don't Have to Say You Love Me" in a glass covered horse-drawn carriage upon which the singer's name was carved out in flowers. Trudy Mitchell, 42, from south-east London wept uncontrollably as the service drew to a close. She said she had been a fan of Dusty's since she was five years old. A neighbour, Gib Hancock, who became Dusty's friend in Henley while she fought the cancer that ended her life, said: "She was without doubt one of the bravest people that I knew."

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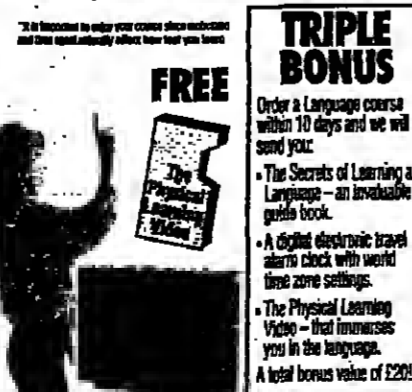


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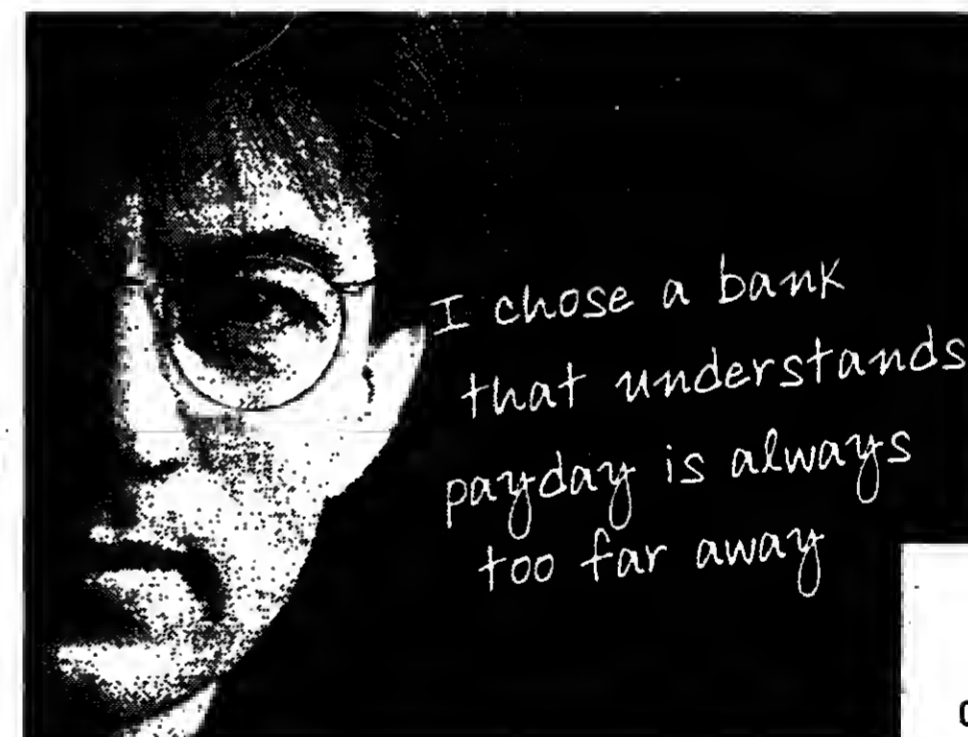
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Is there a place for Lilley at Hague's Kitchen Table?

THERE WAS a collective sigh of relief on the Conservative benches on hearing that Michael Howard has decided to spend more time in his directorships and on the front bench. He has finally bowed to what Michael Portillo described as his "image problem". In truth, though, he has probably decided the Conservatives are simply not going to win the next election.

He will still be able to enjoy a chauffeur and limousine which, as a former Home Secretary, he retains for security reasons. The way is now open for Mr Hague to encourage other old timers to pack it in, despite the rear-guard action last month on their behalf by Gillian Shepherd, Sir Norman Fowler is said to be ready to stand down if required but Mr Hague also surrounds the "nature of the Deputy Leader, Peter Lilley has not spoken at the dispatch box either at question time or in a debate since last June and looks miserable most of the time. In fact, the body language of several frontbenchers is giving Conservative MPs cause for concern. Francis Maude, the shadow Chancellor, and James Arbuthnot, the "invisible" Chief Whip, sit glumly with permanent scowls on their faces. This hardly suggests that they have come to terms with the long haul of opposition. Iain Duncan Smith, the shadow Social

Security spokesman is among those tipped as Mr Howard's replacement because of his hard-line stance on Europe.

THE DEBATE on women brought back blots from the past on both sides with excellent speeches from former ministers. Harriet Harman and Virginia Bottomley, Ms Harman had a go at the "New Labour, New Lad" style of the Government, with a full frontal assault on its failure to "talk to women as well as men". She attacked it for falling back on "militaristic, macho, hierarchical language and behaviour". She gave as an example the manner in which the Government tried to refocus the media agenda in the aftermath of Peter Mandelson's resignation. "They announced that the refocusing would be led by the big guns, the big hitters and the big beasts," Ms Harman said this was an example of men talking about men to other men and denied that her views could be dismissed as political correctness.

Mrs Bottomley, meanwhile, was brought back onto the Conservative front bench to wind up the debate for the Opposition - underlining the Tory shortage of women MPs. She made mince-meat of the government document "Delivering for women - progress so far", exposing it as nothing more than a series of trite comments. Mrs Bottomley has been one of the few former cabinet ministers not to sink without trace. She has successfully reinvented herself and may make a surprise re-entry to permanent frontbench duties.

GERALD HOWARTH (C, Aldershot) has been stalking the Lord Chancellor over the alleged misuse of his official private office to promote his close friend, Andrew Patrick, in his rejoining of the Garrick Club. In answer to Mr Howarth, the Prime Minister confirmed that Lord Irvine's office "was involved in preparing and dispatching some letters on the Lord Chancellor's behalf. This was an oversight and the costs have been reimbursed". Mr Howarth then ascertained in another written question (cost £112) that £9.80 for postage, £7.84 for stationery, and £6.98 for typing had been repaid to the Government by Lord Irvine.

WILLIAM HAGUE prepares for this weekend's half-yearly mini-Tory conference at Reading with the fourth relaunch since he became party leader.

He began with "fresh future" before moving onto the "listening to Britain" exercise. But this was superseded by the policy of doing



THE WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

MICHAEL BROWN

things "the British way". Now we have the latest gimmick called "kitchen table Conservatism" which is no longer based on economics and is to be conducted in shirt sleeves and without ties.

Mr Hague should not downgrade the previous emphasis on economics. He played to his strengths this week with an effective response to the Budget by con-

centrating on the single target of cumulative tax increases since Gordon Brown became Chancellor.

Mr Hague has also taken the law into his own hands when it comes to dealing with the press. No longer relying on spin-doctors to harangue the sceptical media, he is challenging journalists to judo bouts following his regular training sessions with his minder, Sebastian Coe. First up is "Judo Matt", otherwise known as *The Sunday Telegraph's* deputy editor, Matthew D'Ancona. Hacks are demanding attendance to the grudge match but all the smart money is on Hague to win at least this battle with the press.

PADDY ASHDOWN may have ordered aspiring leadership candidates not to declare themselves formally or canvass actively for support, but subtle hints of makeovers, preparation for the hustings ahead, have already been noticed.

The ooze fierce and formidable Jackie Ballard (Taunton) has softened her edges for media appearances and positively glows with elegance after a transformation in her dress sense. Meanwhile the greying, tousled locks of Don Foster (Bath) have suddenly become a suspiciously shiny shade of brown, with more than a hint of Grecian 2000.

DAVID BLUNKETT's black, curly haired retriever, Lucy, who was in disgrace with Millbank Tower for her sickly reaction to the Budget debate, is gaining a reputation for forthright political views.

On one occasion she responded to an evasive answer from Tony Blair during question time with an embarrassing growl of disgust. But she knows party loyalty better than most canine politicians. Even before the general election, when she was newer than her boss to her duties, she tried to lead Mr Blunkett on to the government benches. Stopping off once in Smith Square, Westminster, for a call of nature while in a taxi - accompanied by this newspaper's political editor and Mr Blunkett - she dutifully bounded over to defeat in front of Conservative Central Office.

THIS WEEK'S Budget was more Flash Gordon than Prudence. MPs on all sides were dazzled with Mr Brown's wizardry. But, as Labour MPs cheered it to the echo, Andrew Rowe (C, Faversham and Mid-Kent) remarked that the last time he heard a similar reaction was when Conservative MPs cheered Nigel Lawson's 1988 Budget. It was downhill to recession for the Conservatives from that point on. The word "budget" comes from

the French bougette meaning a "small bag" and is thought to derive from a cartoon in a pamphlet of 1733 which showed Sir Robert Walpole (the Prime Minister and Chancellor) opening a bag (or budget) full of medicines and potions. Mr Brown's 67-minute speech was relatively short but was beaten for brevity by Benjamin Disraeli's record of 45 minutes in 1867. The longest Budget speech, by William Gladstone in 1853, took five hours to deliver - hence the tradition that permits the Chancellor to refresh himself with alcohol. In the last century even MPs in the house were recorded as having been "fortified" with spirits during particularly long-winded speeches.

More recently Ken Clarke chose malt whisky; Nigel Lawson, in the yuppie Eighties, went for spritzer while Geoffrey Howe opted for gin and tonic. In previous times, rum with orange was the choice of Hugh Gaitskill. Derrick Heathcote Amory, a Conservative chancellor in the Fifties, chose milk and honey with rum although he actually collapsed while delivering the Budget. Overwork rather than the rum was responsible for that embarrassment. Mr Brown took no chances, sticking to mineral water during his speech to ensure a clear head for the round of media broadcasts and interviews afterwards.

Tory plan for secret poll test of MPs

ALL TORY MPs could be forced to face mandatory reselection contests in a move to root out sleaze and promote more women to Parliament.

Radical plans to make sitting MPs undergo compulsory secret ballots of local members will be considered for the first time at the Conservative spring conference tomorrow. Under the measures, proposed in a motion before the Spring Forum at Reading, the party's current re-election procedures would be replaced by a more formal system of reselection.

The idea's backers claim that it would end forever fiascos such as the failure of Conservative Central Office to prevent Neil Hamilton from standing in Tatton at the last general election.

They also say that it would make it much easier for women, and even for homosexual candidates, to win nominations for plum seats in the Tory heartlands.

However, opponents believe that the move would plunge the Tories into the same kind of bloodletting that dogged Labour when it adopted the practice of compulsory reselection in the early Eighties.

Many Tory MPs reacted angrily to the move when informed by Archie Hamilton, chairman of the party's backbench 1922 Committee, but it is backed by grass-roots activists.

The motion will be moved by Lady Bethell, chairman of Buckingham Conservative Association, in a secret session of the Tory conference.

It is understood that William Hague dislikes the motion "in its current form" and may pressure delegates to defer making a decision on the matter.

However, the Tory leader is known to favour the greater democracy of the proposals and does not want to rule out change altogether.

SELECTION
BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

One Tory Association representative, who did not want to be named, said: "Some MPs hate the idea, but lots of people in the voluntary party want more democracy."

Tory associations currently conduct re-election meetings with a show of hands unless a third of members call for a secret ballot or the constituency chairman decides to have one. Normally, the procedure is a rubber stamp, but some activists point out that the system prohibits those who want change but do not want to publicly criticise their MP.

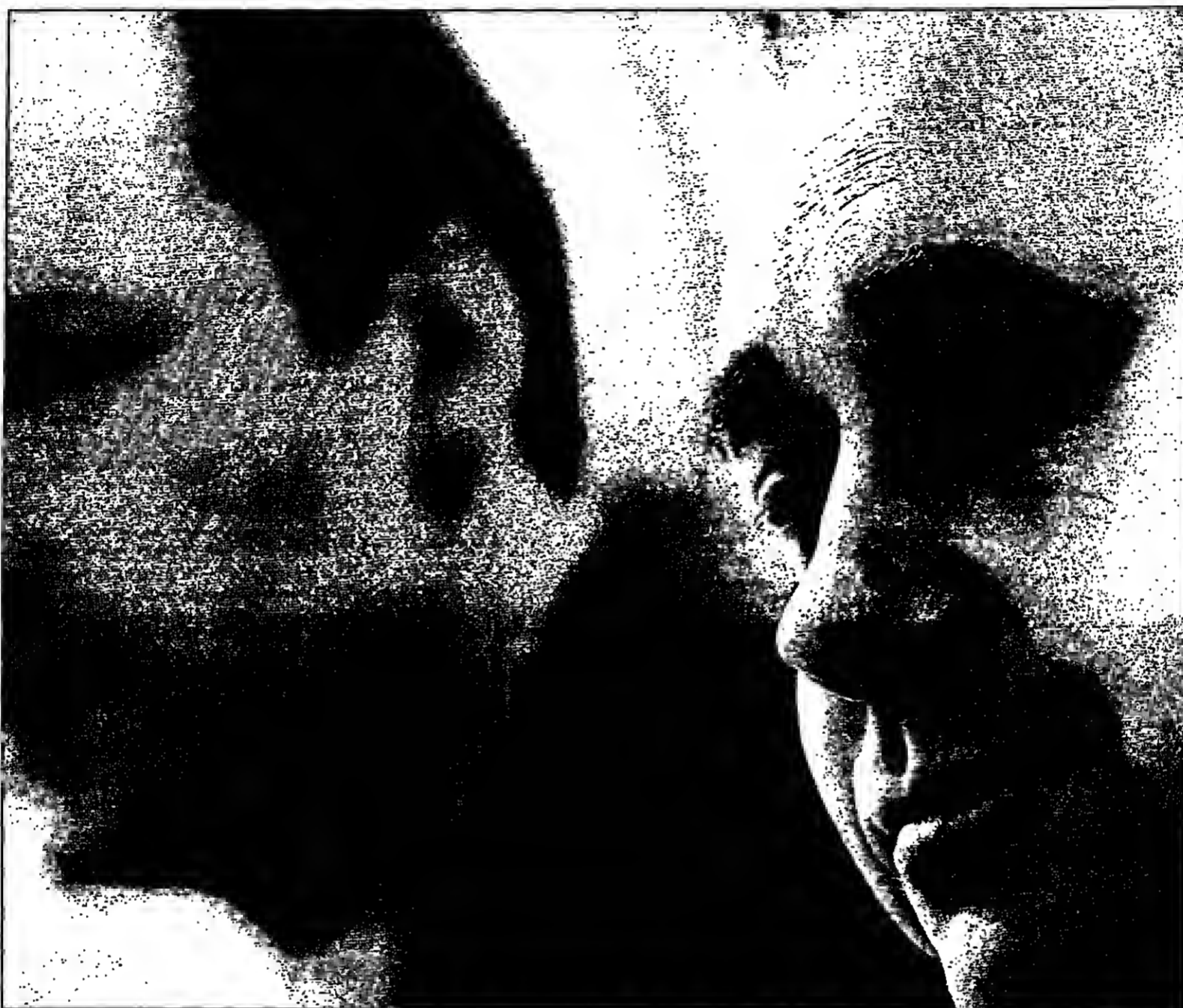
Mr Hague will use the spring conference today to outline his new "caring Conservatism" approach, and deliver eight specific manifesto commitments for the next general election.

Key among them will be a pledge to reintroduce to the tax and benefit system an "explicit and special recognition of marriage". Although the restoration of the Married Couples' Allowance is not likely, transferring partners' tax allowances is one possible proposal.

The Tory leader will also promise to abolish budget capping of local councils and to cut red tape for business.

In his keynote speech, Mr Hague will say that he wants to "break free" from the Tories' past under the Thatcher and Major governments: if the Conservative Party is going to champion freedom, local institutions, champion a better quality of life for all, then it cannot allow itself to be seen as elitist, out of touch, and arrogant.

"It cannot allow itself to be seen as for the few rather than the many, as harsh and uncaring. Ours will be a party that has broken free. It will be a party that cares," he will say.



Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, taking questions from the media yesterday before the party's conference in Aberdeen Jeff J Mitchell/Reuters

Salmond takes a gamble on tax

SCOTS WILL become the highest taxed people in Britain if the Scottish National Party wins control of the Holyrood Parliament in May. In a finely balanced gamble, Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, yesterday appealed to the people of Scotland to forego the Chancellor's 1p cut in income tax in favour of spending on public services.

The tax move opens clear ideological water between Labour and the nationalists and, apart from independence itself, will form the key issue of the election campaign.

Mr Salmond said the choice was "between an election penny bribe under Labour or investment in health, education and

DEVOLUTION
BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

housing under the SNP". But not all delegates at the party's special conference in Aberdeen shared their leader's confidence in Scots' philanthropy, with one critic saying he had "lit the funeral pyre" of the SNP.

The disclosure came as a surprise to most party activists who had expected Mr Salmond to echo Labour in promising not to use parliament's tax varying powers in the first four years.

Gordon Brown said the plan had been "concocted in the last day or two" and would make hundreds of thousands of

Scots worse off. But the Chancellor sounded rattled, betraying a fear that Mr Salmond's gamble may pay off.

From April next year, if Mr Salmond gets his way, taxpayers will be paying 1p in the pound more on the basic rate than those south of the Border. A person on £15,000 a year will pay £2.69 a week more than in England and someone on £40,000 an extra £5.19 a week.

Though the leadership avoided talking of a tax "rise", the only way to keep the basic rate at 23p is if Holyrood votes to levy the extra 1p. The SNP calculates it will raise £230m a year, to be ring-fenced for education, health and housing.

The high-risk strategy enables the SNP to bracket Labour with the Tories as putting tax cuts before services. Mr Salmond cited a recent ICM poll showing 85 per cent of Scots backed using tax powers for defined public services. But conventional wisdom suggests voters' generosity deserts them at the ballot box.

Mr Salmond told delegates the Government was spending less on education in Scotland than the Tories when Michael Forsyth was Secretary of State.

"Gordon Brown thinks that the Scottish election can be bought for £2 a week for the average Scot. Bought and sold for a penny off tax! I think he is wrong." He added that on 6 May

the party was "running for gold". An SNP government would offer, within its first four-year term, a referendum on independence, he reaffirmed.

"We are ready to win ... to be a nation again."

Labour rounded on the SNP tax plan with a nervous fury. Mr Brown, meeting businessmen in Edinburgh, said: "The losers would be home-owners, they would be pensioners, young people starting out."

A further worry for Labour is that the move increases the chances of the SNP being able to form a coalition at Holyrood with the Liberal Democrats, who are ready to raise taxes to pay for schools and hospitals.

Mr Brown said the SNP's pledge that New Labour had to be "whiter than white" after years of Tory sleaze.

Rhodri Morgan, the Public Administration Committee's chairman and a campaigner for freedom of information, said it was "very important" that after such a long delay the Bill was going to be published.

However, the key question remained how the Bill would define exceptions to the principle that information should be released, such as on the grounds that it would harm the national interest. Mr Morgan stressed it was vital that the Bill specified "substantial harm" as the test.

Straw plans Bill on data freedom

INFORMATION
BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

A DRAFT Bill on freedom of information will be published in May, the Home Secretary Jack Straw announced in a Commons written reply yesterday.

He also revealed that ministers would extend the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information to more than 150 quangos.

The code commits the non-departmental and advisory bodies to give the public facts and analysis about policy decisions. It also sets guidelines for dealing with the public and requires the organisations to give reasons for administrative decisions.

Mr Straw said: "Freedom of information is a fundamental part of that process and should significantly transform the relationship between citizens and the state."

A draft Bill is put out for widespread consultation, ahead of a move to bring in legislation. The Government came under pressure after the Queen's Speech when it emerged that no date was given for the publication of the draft.

There was some backbench concern that the Government, by only introducing a draft Bill, had put the manifesto pledge on hold after the sacking of Dr David Clark, the former cabinet office minister last summer. Dr Clark was regarded as the leading campaigner for a Freedom of Information Act and had apparently already drafted legislation on the matter.

A Freedom of Information Act has been regarded as being at the heart of Tony Blair's pledge that New Labour had to be "whiter than white" after years of Tory sleaze.

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Racism claims 'offensive and stupid'

DOWNING STREET yesterday attacked as "offensive and stupid" reported remarks by the singer Patti Boulaye that the killers of Stephen Lawrence were either Labour voters or National Front supporters.

Ms Boulaye, who hopes to stand as a Tory candidate for the new London assembly next year, made her comments in an interview that has caused deep embarrassment in Conservative Central Office.

The former winner of ITV's *New Faces* show also prompted anger with her claim that 80 per cent of Labour supporters were racist, compared to 20 per cent of Conservatives. The 44-year-

LONDON ASSEMBLY
BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

old singer and actress was paraded two weeks ago as the Tories' newest recruit and was pictured with William Hague in a bid to win key ethnic minority votes in the Greater London Authority elections in May 2000.

However, the PR coup backfired yesterday when she made a series of outlandish comments in *The Express* newspaper, including the claim that prejudice is what makes black footballers good players and that a good economy "stops black people feeling so black".

Ms Boulaye immediately claimed that she had been misquoted in the article, but a verbatim transcript of the taped interview confirms the accuracy of her reported quotes.

"I would say 80 per cent of Labour people I have met have been prejudiced, as opposed to 20 per cent of Conservatives ... Most of the Labour people I have met have been prejudiced," the transcript reads.

"I mean those boys accused of killing Stephen Lawrence, I can assure you that they voted if not National Front, it's either National Front or Labour."

Tony Blair's official spokesman seized on the remarks at

the daily Number 10 briefing of lobby journalists, saying that it was "just another embarrassing moment for William Hague".

"If she said that, those views are offensive and stupid. Most people, let alone Labour Party supporters, would find it offensive," the spokesman added.

Officially Conservative Central Office stood by Ms Boulaye yesterday, backing her claim that she had been misquoted.

Privately, Tory sources pointed out that Ms Boulaye had not yet been adopted as an official party candidate and would not be likely to until November, when the selection process was completed.

Ms Boulaye, Lawrence's killer's "voted Labour"

Patti Boulaye, Lawrence's killer's "voted Labour"

Patti Boulaye, Lawrence's killer's "voted Labour"

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Patti Boulaye, Lawrence's killer's "voted Labour"



Patti Boulaye, Lawrence's killer's "voted Labour"

Brown fails to impress Blair with CAP reform

NICK BROWN yesterday sought to fight off criticism over the deal he reached on the Common Agricultural Policy ahead of Monday's crunch meeting of European finance ministers.

The Agriculture Minister defended the overhaul of the 37-year-old system as a "major step forward" which marked a "radical change in direction".

The reform, yet to be agreed by finance ministers at an Ecofin meeting, will lead to cuts in subsidies on beef, dairy and cereals production, with dairy quotas phased out in 2006.

However, the deal, struck

AGRICULTURE
BY SARAH SCHAEFER

after all-night negotiations, has been rejected by Tony Blair as "not good enough".

In a Commons statement, Mr Brown acknowledged it would take years for the full benefits to come into force, but said the reform would be good for British consumers, farmers and the environment.

"The outcome represents a radical change in the direction of the CAP for which the Government has been pressing strongly."

It had been achieved despite a reluctance to reform on the part of several countries, he added. The British rebate had never been under discussion during the negotiations.

Shadow Agriculture Minister Tim Yeo said despite Mr Brown's "rather extravagant" claims, the deal was unsatisfactory. "Claims of a windfall for consumers are hopelessly premature," he said.

He added that the deal had failed to reform the CAP in the promised way and the cost of it would now rise even further than originally feared.

to impress
P reform

GM peas are safe, sacked scientist says

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

ARPA PUSZTAI, the scientist whose claims that genetically modified potatoes damaged laboratory rats prompted a huge political and scientific controversy, has concluded that GM peas are quite harmless.

In new research submitted to a scientific journal, Dr Pusztai found there was "no detrimental effect" on the health of rats fed on peas that had been genetically modified in a similar way to the potatoes.

The new findings cast doubt on the suggestion - made by Dr Pusztai and his supporters - that the rats in the potato experiment suffered as a result of eating GM food. The results support the view that the rats' ill health was due to eating raw potatoes, which are well known to be nutritionally poor.

Dr Pusztai was suspended and forced into retirement from the Rowett Research Institute in Aberdeen last August after a television interview, in which he claimed that rats fed



Dr Pusztai: New research

GM potatoes had stunted internal organs and defective immune systems. But his latest research paper, submitted to the *Journal of Nutrition* in the US, observes that GM peas which contained an insecticidal agent derived from a bean plant had no discernible effect on laboratory animals. They also proved to be just as nutritious as ordinary peas.

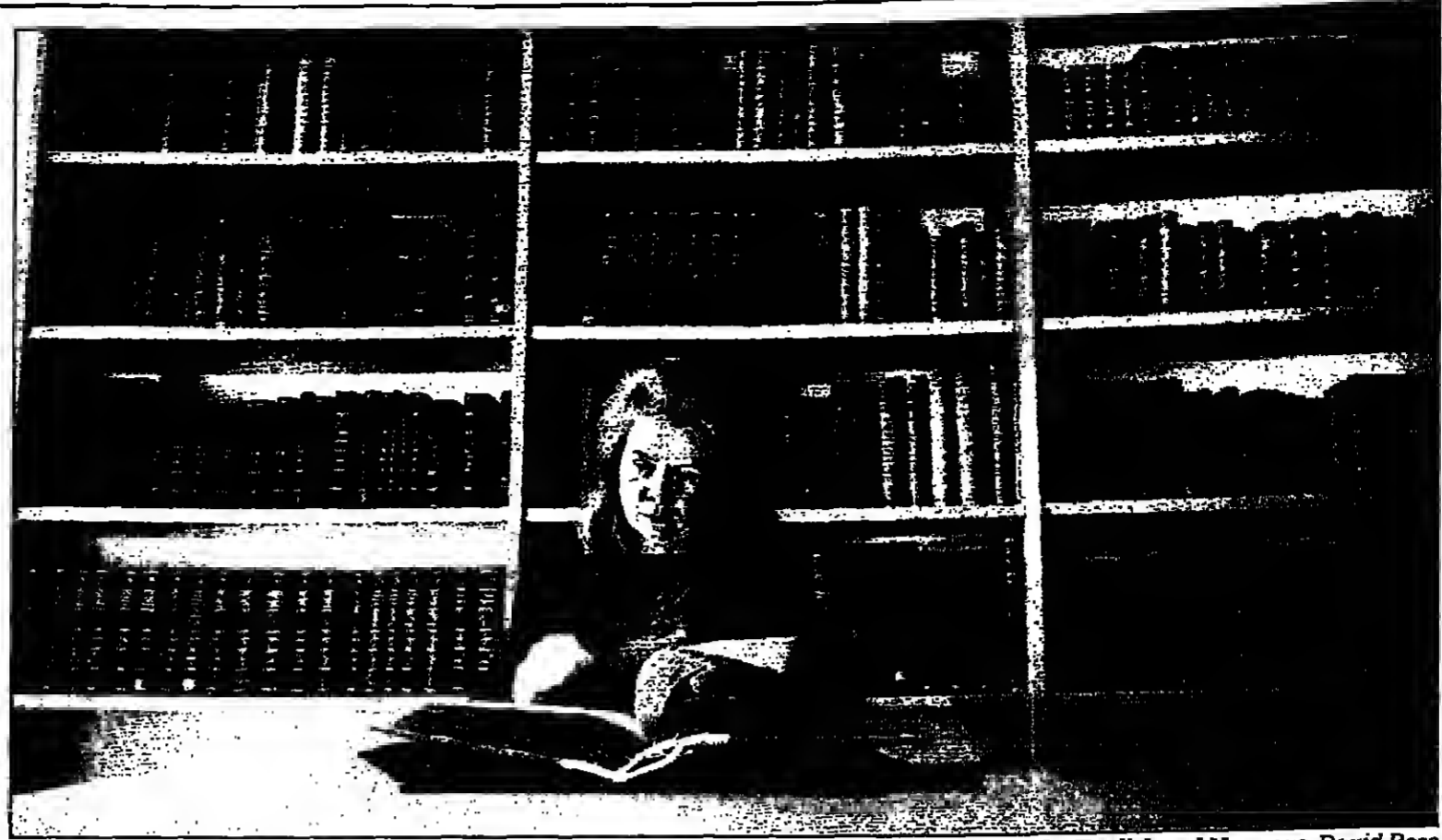
Dr Pusztai did not mention the research when he appeared before the Science and Tech-

nology Committee of the House of Commons last Monday, when he told MPs that he had no regrets over the statements he made to the media about the dangers of GM food. He was also asked why he had suggested that the public were being used as guinea pigs to test the safety of GM food. He replied that it was because there had been so little research proving it was safe.

The Royal Society, Britain's most prestigious scientific institution, has launched an investigation into Dr Pusztai's work. The six leading specialists appointed as independent arbiters will report their conclusions next month.

Lord Sainsbury of Turville, the Science minister, has ordered a review of the way the Government handles issues of public concern such as genetic engineering and cloning. It was announced yesterday.

There will be consultation and research into public knowledge and attitudes about science which could be used to inform policy-making.



Analysis of the Domesday Book by Dr Katharine Keats-Rohan has revealed a social gulf between the English and Normans David Rose

Normans practised apartheid on English

A NEW STUDY of the Domesday Book has found life in England after the Norman Conquest was a "medieval version of apartheid", with the English living as second-class citizens in their own land.

The divide between the 1.5 million Anglo-Saxons and the 20,000 Normans was even

greater than historians previously thought, according to an eight-year research project by an Oxford medievalist, Dr Katharine Keats-Rohan.

Her detailed genealogical analyses of the 11th century

Domesday Book and 12th century manuscripts have revealed that in the 100 years following the Norman conquest there was virtually no inter-marriage between the Norman aristocracy and the English. In the top 10 Norman families, there was no inter-marriage at all for several

centuries. Among a further 2,000 Norman families, the inter-marriage rate was less than 5 per cent for at least four generations.

"Most historians have assumed there was substantial intermarriage between the Normans and the English. My research has revealed that

this was definitely not the case," said Dr Keats-Rohan. "I believe it shows the Normans considered themselves to be socially and ethnically elite. It was socially unacceptable to mix with the English. In terms of ethnic superiority and social separation, it was a medieval forerunner of apartheid."

Lottery to fund new city parks

A SCHEME to create more urban parks and playing fields was unveiled by the Government yesterday. The £125m project, funded by the National Lottery, will benefit schools, councils and community groups, who will be able to apply for grants to transform their local landscape.

Money will be allocated to buy derelict land and improve existing green areas. It is hoped the scheme will help reverse the steep decline of land available for outdoor sport, which has seen an estimated 10,000 playing fields sold to developers in the past 20 years. The "green spaces initiative" will be spread over three years.

Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture and Sport, said yesterday: "It is a tragedy that thousands of school playing fields have been sold off, leaving youngsters with fewer green areas to play in and develop their sporting prowess whilst at the same time many acres of former industrial land lies unused. This scheme will benefit children, schools, com-

munity groups and our national sporting future."

Labour has promised to tackle the decline in school and grassroots sport; under the last government local authorities sold off 5,000 playing field sites to raise money.

Last year David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, introduced an amendment to the School Standards and Framework Bill which required local authorities to seek his approval before selling school playing fields that the Sports Council thought should be retained.

The Government also hopes its scheme will encourage greater access to the countryside and improve the environment through recycling schemes. Mr Smith said: "The green spaces initiative is aimed at giving communities the opportunities to improve the environment, delivering social and economic benefits, building community skills and bringing communities together."

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Killer put lover's head in concrete

A FAILED businessman who was jailed for life yesterday for murdering his lover and en- casing her head in a concrete block had previously tried to hire a hitman to kill his wife and daughter, it later emerged.

Kenneth Peatfield, 50, of Sheffield, was found guilty of murdering his partner Susan Craven, 54, whom he planned to replace with his teenage lover. Mrs Craven's head, which was probably cut off with a power saw, was found in a two-

feet block of concrete at the house she shared with Peatfield. The rest of the dead woman's remains have never been found.

The nine women and three men on the jury at Sheffield Crown Court gasped when they learned after giving yesterday's verdict that Peatfield had earlier been convicted of trying to kill his wife and 10-year-old daughter. He was jailed for 10 years in 1994 for hiring a hit-

man to murder his wife Janet and daughter Helen.

He had planned to inherit £50,000 through an insurance policy, but the plot back-fired when the hit-man refused to carry out the killings and went to police. His ex-wife Janet, now 50, said at the time of the trial: "He was a good husband and father and I was so shocked that he could do such a thing."

In his defence in this latest case, Peatfield claimed that someone had swapped the concrete block containing his wife's head with one he had made as part of a garden ornament.

Jailing him for life yesterday, Mr Justice Bell said: "You murdered the woman with whom you had lived for some years. A woman who needed your support. You murdered her when you were infatuated with a much younger woman who you hoped would come to live with you in Susan Craven's place."

Females are better at burglary

WOMEN ARE considerably better burglars than men, according to newly released Home Office research.

A detailed analysis of the 1,638,000 burglaries on domestic properties in England and Wales during 1997 has revealed the previously unheralded role of women in house-breaking.

Of the burglaries where details of the offender were known (41 per cent of break-ins), six per cent of the burglars were women acting alone.

But these female thieves accounted for a disproportionately high nine per cent of successful burglaries, which totalled £78,000 in the year.

They were responsible for only one per cent of attempted but failed burglaries, of which there were 761,000 in 1997.

Although burglary is invariably regarded as a crime committed by strangers, victims of burglaries where the details of the offender were known said that they knew the person well in 34 per cent of cases and recognised their face in a further 17 per cent.

The Home Office report, *Burglary of Domestic Dwellings*, reveals that the highest proportion of burgled burglaries are carried out by schoolchildren, who fail to gain entry to property in the majority of their attempted break-ins. The report was based on answers given to researchers for the 1998 British Crime Survey.

The report shows that home security measures are having a marked impact on reducing the numbers of successful burglaries. In nearly half of all attempted break-ins in 1997, the criminals failed to gain access to the property.

The Home Office minister Paul Boateng said that "the sim-

plest home security measures can have a significant impact on our chances of being burgled."

"By reducing the number of easy targets we can have a dramatic effect on crime. But, he said: "Despite recent reductions, England and Wales has one of the worst records on burglary in the industrialised world."

He said the Government was investing £50m over the next three years on an anti-burglary initiative in areas with high crime rates.

The research revealed that Asian families are more likely to be burglary victims than other ethnic groups.

Also vulnerable are homes where the head of the household is between 16 and 24, single parent families, and those living in detached houses or inner-city areas.

Ownership of home security devices has increased dramatically over the last six years and 24 per cent of homes now have burglar alarms, with 48 per cent having security lights.

Some 48 per cent of burglars entered the property they robbed from the rear but 42 per cent broke in at the front of the dwelling, with 70 per cent of all successful break-ins being made through a door.

Most burglaries occur when the offender forces their way in. A lock on a door or a window is forced in 37 per cent of break-ins and a window is broken in 24 per cent of such crimes.

But in almost a quarter (22 per cent) of cases the criminal is able to gain entry to the property through an unlocked door or open window.

In six per cent of cases, access is gained to the house on a false pretence.



Karl Lagerfeld with models at his autumn/winter ready-to-wear collection for Chanel in Paris yesterday. Jack Daboghian/Reuters

Fashion emperor's new clothes

BY REBECCA LOWEHRER
In Paris

ONE MORE day for Karl Lagerfeld, the king of Paris fashion, to show his autumn/winter 2000 collection. The 60 models tramped down what seemed like a mile-long catwalk at the Chanel autumn/winter 2000 show in Paris yesterday.

The clothes were no less expensive than the show's setting, from ultra-sharp modernism to country-estate chic to lavish eveningwear. Lagerfeld favoured the millennial issue head-on with metallic leather skirts, outsized silver chain belts and

shell tops and body-skimming skirts. Lagerfeld knows his customer through and through.

He is also obviously aware of what Chanel sells best: handbags. So, with one eye on commercialism and the other looking to the future, he offered quilted skirts that mimicked the quilted Chanel handbag.

He also cleverly incorporated the much-maligned Chanel 2001 bag - the futuristic ergonomic design, which took almost two years to create - but this time around it looked more accessible in soft cream wool.

When Lagerfeld took over as honcho of Chanel, the most prestigious of all fashion houses, he poked fun at the history of the label by brandishing the linked-C logo on everything from moonboots to a milk-bottle-top-sized bikini bra. In more recent seasons he took the label right back to its roots, paying homage to the great Coco Chanel. Then, again last season, the modern image-maker moved the look into the sports-wear arena - another sign that the designer had his finger firmly on the pulse. Some put

Doctors warned on bone disease

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

MASS SCREENING of the population for the bone thinning disease osteoporosis is not worthwhile and checks should be limited to those at high risk, an expert committee said yesterday.

The Royal College of Physicians called for those with signs of osteoporosis to be identified and treated at an early stage to prevent the condition worsening, causing pain and disability to the sufferer and costing the NHS almost £1bn a year.

In new guidelines, the college said osteoporosis is often wrongly labelled as a woman's disease. It affects 50 per cent of women over 70 but the risk for men is as much as half that for women.

It causes 200,000 fractures a year and the number is rising by 10 per cent a year. Over the next 50 years the number of fractures is expected to double because of the ageing population.

The guidelines say doctors should be aware of treatments for osteoporosis that can reduce the risk of repeated fractures. It says health experts should co-ordinate their activities "with a focus on reducing the huge burden of fractures suffered by patients".

However, the National Osteoporosis Society said there were too few bone density scanning machines available even to test those at high risk, defined as women (or men) who have lost height, suffered a "fragile" fracture (as a result of a minor accident) or taken steroid drugs for over six months.

Linda Edwards, the director said: "The report demonstrates that current provision for osteoporosis in many areas is under-prioritised and under-resourced."

Anti-woman priest worships in a shed

MOST OPPONENTS of women priests turn to Rome. But one disaffected Church of England vicar looked no further than the shed in his back garden for the answer to his spiritual dilemma.

The Rev Stephen Weston, who left the Church of England last summer over the ordination of women priests, has constructed a cross-shaped wooden chapel in the garden of his terraced house in Sutton, Norfolk. He calls it "Stephen's Byzantine Shed".

The former rector of Sutton with Tigham and Catfield, in the Norfolk Broads, was received into the Orthodox Church last October. Mr Weston has been licensed as an Orthodox reader, which gives him the authority to conduct services.

He has a congregation of five - mostly disaffected Anglicans - who fit quite neatly into his 18 feet by 13 feet chapel. But it's a bit of a squeeze when Father Alexander Haig, the local Or-

thodox priest from Colchester, visits once a month. "I'm tall and thin, so I manage," said Mr Weston, "but he is... broader."

Yesterday was the fifth anniversary of the ordination of the first women priests in Bristol Cathedral, an event which triggered the exodus of 440 Anglican clergymen. Mr Weston, 50, would have left earlier, but he had to hold on until he had done 30 years service in the priesthood in order to qualify for his pension.

"The ordination of women priests was the last straw for me," he said yesterday. "It signified that the bishops who pushed it forward did not regard themselves as guardians of the apostolic faith."

The Church of England ceased to be my spiritual home. Discovering Orthodoxy was



Stephen Weston in the Orthodox chapel he built in his back garden. Grant Norman

Appeal Court backs trader in fight with Elvis's estate

THE MIGHTY Elvis Presley Enterprises yesterday lost the latest round of a David and Goliath legal wrangle to stop a London trader from using the singer's name on his souvenirs.

Three Court of Appeal judges rejected a challenge by EPE, of Memphis, Tennessee, to an earlier court ruling in favour of Sid Shaw, who runs a

memorabilia shop called Elvish Yours.

Mr Shaw, whose shop in the Trocadero Centre in London's Piccadilly Circus sells articles from watches to toiletries that bear the singer's name, won a ruling from a High Court judge

in March 1997 that EPE did not have the sole right to Elvis Presley's name.

After that ruling EPE took their case to the Court of Appeal, challenging the decision by Mr Justice Laddie that a celebrity's name, whether they are living or dead, cannot be used as a trademark.

His ruling led to the rejection

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THE SEVEN TYPES OF SPENDER



Deadliest shopping species is the male

RESEARCHERS HAVE utilised "spies" and spent five years video-taping thousands of consumers to identify for retailers the seven definitive types of British shopper.

They range from the "county classics" (married women over 35) to "young fashionables" (in search of an identity). But by far the most worrying type for retailers are the "shopping saboteurs" - men who suffer symptoms of "shopping overload". They may become quiet and unresponsive or twitchy and argumentative and may exhibit aggressive behaviour even before arriving at the shops.

David Peek, a psychotherapist with a background in marketing, interviewed consumers in the south-east to create the psychographic profiles for Bluewater shopping

BY CLARE GARNER

centre, which opens in Kent on Tuesday. The shopping centre used the information to design a "psychologically tested" car park, "welcome halls" and a shopper-friendly map, in an attempt to thwart the saboteur.

"Shopping is a bit like dancing," Mr Peek said. "Your partner might be reluctant to take to the floor, but once they are motivated, they'll have more fun than anyone." He recommended taking hourly breaks, planning lunch somewhere "to break up the day" and agreeing on a spending limit in advance.

He said county classics is the largest cluster. "These shoppers are particularly interested in success; they are concerned about what others think of them and cynical

about fashion. Penelope Keith has a touch of this about her."

Young fashionables are interested in "cosmetics, grooming and, because they are insecure, they are concerned about their visual health rather than their deep health", said Mr Peek, who identified a growing number of men in this bracket. David Beckham is a "classic".

"Club executives" are career-oriented people who are seeking status merchandise. Efficiency is essential when dealing with these men - and, increasingly, women. "They have a very short patience threshold when doing business. They are constantly comparing the service to that to which they aspire in their own business life," he said.

When it comes to catering to "home comfortables" - el-

derly customers with traditional tastes - the secret is to avoid challenging their outlook on life. "Home comfortables like to be served by people their own age," Mr Peek said.

Shopping can be therapy for the "young survivors", Mr Peek said. "These people have little talent in selling their skills and therefore have difficulty assembling wealth. If they are treated with respect they will find [shopping] a boost to their self-esteem."

"Sporting thirties" are people who refuse to grow up. "They really don't want to shop. They want to go to a bar," Mr Peek said. Then there are the "budget optimists" - the staid South London types. They can live without the "ego massaging"; they are simply looking for "a sense of trust in their transactions".

Store of old virtues battles to keep trade

BY DARIUS SANAI

JOHN LEWIS, the favourite retailer of the suburban middle classes, is going through a rocky patch. Its full-year profits are down 17 per cent, and its chairman, Sir Stuart Hampson, has warned of a "sticky few months ahead".

Its stores have made little concession to the changing trends of modern retailing. In its flagship Oxford Street store, for example, the floors and walls are still beige and the displays understated, in contrast to those in funkier chain shops across the road. The haberdashery section looks delightfully archaic - belonging in an old colonial capital rather than the centre of London's busiest shopping street.

And this is what is hobbling the company in the battle for shoppers. "My son refuses to come here, whatever I say," said David Holmes, a regular customer at the Oxford Street shop. "He is 30 now, but he still says it's 'uncool'."

Sir Stuart agreed yesterday that the store's image ("of the place where your parents dragged you when you were a child") was unlikely to endure it to twentysomethings. But he insisted the downturn was merely part of a general trend. "I see huge problems ahead but not insurmountable ones. Like anyone else, we will have to adapt," he said.

The John Lewis approach



'Old-fashioned values'

has its die-hard fans. Vicky Binnenden, a mother of four from North London who has been a John Lewis regular for 25 years, said: "It's marvellous - it always has been. And this is the only shop where they know what they are doing."

It seems the firm's old-fashioned values are what draw the customers. Mary Woodford, shopping for a tablecloth, said: "Somehow they manage to keep the prices so reasonable but the assistants are not just young people on a training scheme who don't care," she said. In fact, the company's staff is dominated by full-time, long-term employees - all the better for customer service, but a costly and inflexible practice that requires many of the chair's 23 shops to be closed on Sundays and Mondays.

Reliability, dependability and value have always been the store's watchwords. But these values are also of an old, less ruthless world.

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Princess who escaped from a desert cage

UNTIL SHE was 16, Malika Oufkir was an adopted princess, a pampered child in a clandestine world of concubines, despots and slaves. She lived in a world beyond time, a world of the most unimaginable luxury.

At the age of 19, she and her entire family, including her two-year-old brother, and her sisters aged six and nine, were thrown into prison for 20 years.

She spent ten years of that time, growing to adult womanhood, in a remote and barbaric desert jail, isolated from her mother and oldest brother, often close to starvation. She was once again in a world beyond time, but now a world of the most unimaginable cruelty and squalor.

In her first life, her adopted "father", the king, was her loving, sometimes severe but always affectionate benefactor. In her second life, the same man was her pitiless jailer, her distant torturer, the man who robbed her brother and sisters of their childhood. Her only crime and that of her family was their name. Her real father, General Mohammed Oufkir, once the king's most trusted adviser, had tried to assassinate the monarch. The general was executed and his family banished, walled away from the world without trial or charge, until 14 years later, when Malika and three of her siblings tunnelled to temporary freedom with their bare hands.

It could be a tale from *The 1,001 Nights*, except that it happened in the Seventies, Eighties and Nineties and not in some mythical kingdom but in modern Morocco, a country with which the West enjoys friendly - even obsequious - relations. The king in question was Hassan II, one of the West's favourite Arab potentates. While Malika and her family were in prison, King Hassan was negotiating the release of the US embassy hostages in Iran and trying to

By JOHN LICHFIELD
in Paris

broker peace with Saddam Hussein before the Gulf War.

Three years ago, Malika Oufkir and her family, after a final nine years of house arrest and restricted freedom in Morocco, were permitted to emigrate to France.

She has now written her life story in a book called *La Prisonnière* which has shot to the top of the non-fiction best-sellers list in France. An English-language edition is planned. The title of the book applies almost as much to the first part of her life, in gilded but enforced royal adoption, as the second part, in prison.

It is an extraordinary book, co-authored by the French journalist and writer Michèle Fitoussi: a fascinating insider's account of life in a modern harem in the early pages; a moving chronicle of suffering and courage and endurance in prison; and then a heart-stopping thriller when Malika and her siblings escape.

At times the book touches greatness. Malika Oufkir, despite the injustice and suffering imposed on her and her family, manages to write about her father/jailer with affection, generosity, even compassion.

"This is why I had to write the book, because I was haunted by two men," she said, in an interview. The king who had brought me up, who had shaped my education, who made me what I am, whom I still loved. And the king who was my torturer, my executioner. In my dreams, in prison, and since being released, the two men would appear. I would feel terribly guilty that I could not escape from my feelings of affection for him, while, also hating him for what he did to me and my family. It was often physically painful for me but in writing the book I was determined to be honest, to express

both feelings."

Malika Oufkir is a tall, slender, elegant, beautiful woman of 45, married last year to a Parisian architect. She has the great wisdom but also the youthfulness - almost the childlikeness - found in intelligent people whose lives have been taken from them and belatedly restored. (It might be called the Nelson Mandela syndrome).

The act of writing the book, she says, has helped her to achieve a kind of serenity. She can now understand that the king who put his adopted daughter and her two-year-old brother in prison was not the man that she had known as a child. He had himself been "consumed by hatred and wounded by betrayal".

And yet it is clear from the book that the degree of cruelty imposed on Malika and her family was personally controlled by Hassan. Members of his own family, including the Queen, pleaded for clemency. Instead, each time the Oufkir family wrote to the king asking for their freedom, their conditions were made worse.

Only when they tunnelled out, and managed to tell the world their story before they were re-captured, was their life made more humane.

Until then, they survived by imposing scrupulous rules of politeness towards one another, by rigging up a kind of makeshift intercom between their cells, and by a form of gallows humour. When fleas infected the four sisters and their private parts became so swollen that they hung down to their thighs, they joked: "Now we girls have balls too."

A clandestine radio allowed them to keep abreast of world events - the march of the computer, the video-recorder, feminism, successive World Cups - from their medieval cells. Most of all, the prisoners - Malika, her mother, two brothers, four sisters and two cousins - came



Malika Oufkir with her husband Eric, a French architect who she married last month

Alistair Miller

to depend entirely on a kind of soap opera, invented and broadcast by Malika through the hidden intercom.

Every night, once the guards were sleeping, she tried to give her brothers and sisters, through the never-ending story, a sense of the pleasures and evils of the world of which they were deprived. Malika and family spent, not 1,001 nights, but 3,710 nights as the only pris-

oners of their desert jail: they endured over 7,000 nights of imprisonment of one kind or another. "Each of my birthdays was like a dagger in my heart," she wrote in the book.

"At 33, I became resigned. I would never fall in love. I would never have a family. Never would a man take me in his arms and whisper tender and burning words into my ear. "I would never know what

moves the heart and body of a woman." She was partly right and partly wrong. On her release, she met Eric, a French architect, in Rabat and married him last October. The damage too her body in prison means that she will probably never be able to have any children. The psychological damage is much harder to define.

"Ever since I was a child, perhaps because I was taken,

from my family so young, I have had the impression that I was a spectator in my own life," she said.

"Now I have the impression that life is a great fairground and that I am permanently on the edge of it, looking in. I cannot be alone. I have to sleep with the light and radio on. And yet I crave solitude.

"Even when I am with other people, I am often alone."

Mafia boss run to ground

By FRANCES KENNEDY
in Rome

ITALIAN POLICE say documents found in the hiding place of one of the country's most dangerous mafia bosses may lead them to other mobsters on the run.

Giuseppe Piromalli was captured in a dawn raid on a luxury fortress disguised as a desolate building in Gioia Tauro, the southern Italian city dominated by the ferocious Piromalli clan.

Along with cases of champagne that the family used to celebrate the elimination of their enemies, the carabinieri seized papers, receipts and diaries.

Piromalli was one of the key figures of the Calabrian mafia. He was among the most wanted mafiosi in the country.

From the outside, the 54-year-old Godfather's hideaway looked like an abandoned two-storey building. Inside it was a bunker apartment protected by devices worthy of a James Bond movie. Wooden panels operated by remote controls covered the outside walls, sliding steel panels protected the windows.

The sound of the pneumatic drills needed to break through the steel door awoke Piromalli, who attempted to flee through a trapdoor onto the rooftops.

However, on seeing carabinieri helicopters with strobe lights hovering above, he returned to his bedroom with its altar dedicated to the Madonna of Polsi, protector of the mountains where mafia members often take refuge. He was unarmed and did not oppose arrest.

Piromalli, the favourite nephew and heir to the fearsome founder of the Piromalli clan, was sentenced to life in absentia in 1991 for the murder of two brothers who challenged the clan's supremacy.

In addition he was wanted for extortion and explosive attacks against the business empire of media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi.

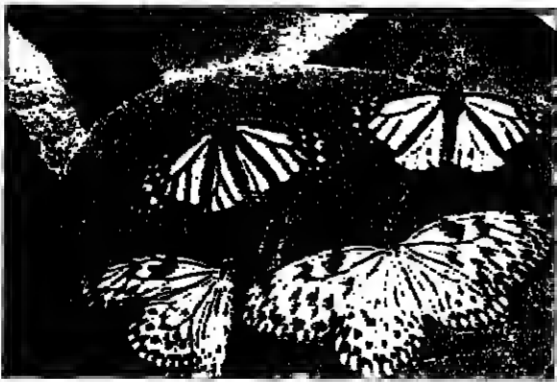
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Rich Pakistanis flock to country's first ski resort

By JASON BURKE
in Malam Jabba, Swat

ALAMGIR KHAN has a number of problems. The dozen local villagers who comprise his piste-flattening machine have not turned up for work, a power cut has stopped his only chairlift and an over-excited coach party who have driven a thousand miles just to see snow have, minutes previously, run down his slopes and left hundreds of deep footprints behind them.

As chief engineer at Pakistan's only ski resort Mr Khan is having a bad day. Perhaps that is not surprising. After all it is a miracle that Pakistan - one of the world's poorest countries - has a working ski resort at all.

Yet perched high on a ridge in the foothills of the Himalayas is Malam Jabba - two pistes, a 52-room hotel, a store room full of new ski gear and an approach road that, according to the local chief of police, you need armed guards to drive on.

Malam Jabba is certainly an odd place for a ski resort. From the swinging chairs of the lift you can see some of the wildest parts of Pakistan's North West Frontier province and the distant snow-capped peaks that mark the border with Afghanistan. It is a view you have plenty of time to inspect when the power goes off.

Only 70 years ago, the British fought some of their toughest campaigns to subdue the Pathan warrior tribes of the area and, in many ways, little has changed since. Until very recently, the hills that line the western horizon used to conceal most of Pakistan's illegal opium fields and heroin refining laboratories. Until 1969, the region was ruled by the magnificently-titled Wali of Swat, and much of it remains effectively outside the control of central government.

Gunfire still regularly rattles the valleys - though now it is more likely to be from a Kalash-



After a hesitant start skiers are beginning to head for Malam Jabba, built with Austrian aid

Jason Burke

nikov than the long-barrelled muskets immortalised by Kipling and scores of Boys' Own stories.

Last year the government was forced to use artillery and tanks to destroy the pink swaths of opium poppy fields that littered the local hillsides. Five years ago the Pakistani army fought pitched battles against hardline Muslim extremists who had seized the local airport.

The insurgents' key demand - that Islamic law be imposed on the area - has recently been conceded by the government in the capital of Islamabad, a seven-hour drive away. Now, theoretically at least, if your skis are stolen while you relax with a glass of lemonade - Pakistan

is a dry country - the thief's hands will be chopped off.

However, Bakhitar Hussein, the resort manager, is a jolly and friendly man. Last week he was in an excellent mood. For the first time since the Prime Minister opened the resort last autumn, all the rooms at his hotel were full. So far Malam Jabba has been losing an estimated £1,000 a month. Now Mr Hussein hopes it will start showing a profit.

"Winter has been tough. There have been times when we were worried and thought the government might close us down but now it looks like it is all going to be all right," he said.

The Austrian government came up with the idea of a ski resort more than 30 years ago.

They have since provided around \$1m (£500,000) worth of aid, including a chairlift, skis and boots, technical help and two all-weather bulldozers.

However, several million pounds of Pakistani public funds was also needed to get Malam Jabba working. Many complained that a ski resort was the wrong way to boost the development of a country where 80 per cent of the population cannot read and more than half lack a clean water supply.

"At best it is misguided, at worst it's immoral," said one Islamabad-based development worker. "It's great for ex-pats or the very rich but is about as appropriate a way of helping the people of Pakistan as building them a school to train Sushi chefs."

Gernod Wiedner, first secretary of the Austrian Embassy in Islamabad, disagrees. "The development has provided a road and employment for local people. We think it is largely a success," he said.

At the resort there are mixed feelings. Many of the workers at Malam Jabba have not been paid for the last two months. One man, trained as a ski technician by an Austrian instructor, said he was unable to pay for medical treatment for his sick child.

"The doctor charges 200 rupees (£2.75) for a visit. My child has a fever that has gone to her head but I can't afford even the doctor's visit let alone medicine," Hassan said.

"There is no electricity in my village and no gas, and wood is expensive so it is very cold now."

Hassan ruefully ran his hand down a newly-waxed ski and checked the sharpness of the edges. "We are poor people so we are not ungrateful. We are just thankful to have jobs," he added.

Suddenly the day's snow conditions seemed slightly less important.

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Little islands watch helpless as their green gold is devalued by vengeful US

BY PHIL DAVISON
in St Lucia

THE PEOPLE of this little Caribbean island have always been a little confused. They are the first to admit it. Since an Italian named Columbus discovered the island on behalf of Spain but moved on, its inhabitants have been seven times under French rule, seven times British. For the past 30 years, they have been very much independent, though they still speak a French patois while driving on the British side of the road.

Whoever was in charge, they always knew they would be all right. They had what they call "green gold." By that, they mean bananas, as vital here as "black gold" - oil - is to Texas. More so. You can eat bananas.

Now, the people of St Lucia, the other Windward Islands and most of the Caribbean - renowned for reggae, rum, calypso and "chillin'" - are upset. They feel a modern-day friend, the United States of America, has let them down. Despite their independence - in the case of St Lucia granted by Britain 20 years ago last month - they are turning their glance back towards the old colonial powers.

They had lost touch with British politics, football, Coronation Street, even, in some cases, cricket. Instead, they had looked north to the US, flying to Miami for holidays, putting basketball hoops in their yards and wearing their baseball caps backwards. Now, "Come back, Britain, all is forgiven," is the sentiment, though only, of course, as allies, not masters.

They are talking about the US decision to launch what is effectively a trade war against Europe, ostensibly over European concessions towards bananas from former colonies. To be honest, folks in the Caribbean, even banana farmers, are not only concerned about themselves. They are mystified as to why the US has picked on Caribbean bananas - which make up only a few per cent of the world banana trade - as a weapon of "war" against



Many in the Caribbean believe the trade war stems from US fears of a strong, united Europe. As one official put it: "The banana issue is a red herring"

Tom Pilsten

the European allies which helped it bombard Iraq.

Many feel that the US is simply flexing its muscles towards a changing Europe that could pose a threat to the supremacy America has enjoyed since the collapse of the Soviet Union. "The US is ruthless," St Lucia's Prime Minister, Kenny Anthony, who is also the Caribbean's chief banana in-

dustrial representative, told me in an unusually frank interview. "Our islands have lost their geopolitical value to them. This is no longer a threat against bananas. This is a political threat against Europe."

Mr Anthony and many other Caribbean officials believe the US used the banana issue as an excuse to launch a trade war against Europe, to "get even"

for anti-US trade measures by Europe in the past. "It's really very clear that we're not just dealing with an issue of bananas," Mr Anthony said. "In selecting bananas, they utilised a very important weapon against Europe. First, they knew we, in the Caribbean, were defenceless and couldn't fight them. Secondly, they knew full well that the allegiance of

Europe on the question of bananas would always be fragile. "I have absolutely no doubt at all that Bill Clinton was fully aware of the consequences of the US actions. We had made it very clear to the US that this would severely compromise the industry, our social stability. If the US goes ahead with sanctions, it will cause permanent damage to relations be-

tween the US and the Caribbean. For the first time, the US is at war not with governments but with small farmers attempting to eke out a living."

James Fletcher, a senior official of the St Lucia agriculture ministry, said: "I think the Americans are worried about the perceived unity of Europe, the euro and that sort of thing. Washington is saying 'We'd better shake them up. We'd better shake them up.' The banana issue is a red herring. They're trying to keep Europe down."

people such as cashmere producers in the Scottish borders. That is in the short term. Long term, the banana farmers in the Caribbean are anxious. They feel the US, at the behest of big American banana corporations, is effectively trying to throw this region back into the Dark Ages.

"Crushing our banana industry could cause total anarchy," said Mr Fletcher. "It's widely accepted that our currency [the East Caribbean dollar] would be devalued. To the Americans, we're just dots in the ocean. We stopped becoming a threat to them after they solved the Grenada problem [when the US intervened in Grenada in the Eighties because of a small Cuban presence]. The Americans wanted to get at Europe. As we say here in our patois, they jumped where the fence was lowest - in the Caribbean."

The Prime Minister said: "I have no doubt whatsoever that the agony that our [banana] industry is going through was orchestrated by Chiquita Brands [the big American banana corporation]." He was referring to his belief that it was Chiquita, based in the US, which pushed the US administration to oppose Europe's banana concessions to its former colonies. Chiquita subsidiaries in Central and South America produce cheaper bananas thanks to cheaper labour and, its opponents say, by providing inhumane conditions for its workers. "We cannot ignore the horrendous social conditions under which Chiquita produces bananas in Latin America," Mr Anthony said. "It is well known that Chiquita has had a sordid political history in Latin America."

Mr Fletcher explained: After independence [from Britain], we looked to the US, our closest neighbours, to protect us. We saw a need to distance ourselves from the colonial power. But now we realise that they [the Americans] are, for want of a better expression, shafting us. We realise what British manufacturers are going through because of the banana issue. Through all of this, we have not lost sight of who our true friends are."

Hungarian troops take leap into West's arms

THEIR FACES covered with camouflage cream, black woolen caps jammed down on their heads, guns at the ready, the soldiers abseiled SAS-style down the walls of their barracks before leaping through open windows.

This could be a Nato exercise anywhere in the western military alliance, but these were Hungarian troops of the 34th Laszlo Beresenyi Reconnaissance Battalion, training at a military base in the eastern city of Szolnok.

Built in the early 1930s, the base once served the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet-led military alliance that was a counterpart to Nato. But now former enemies in the capitalist west are allies of the one-time Communist states and, from yesterday,

BY ADAM LEBOR
in Szolnok

Szolnok base, and the troops there, are part of Nato.

Adapting to Nato methods has demanded a revolution of the mind, as well as of the military Soviet-era battle planning was largely based on Second World War methods of command and control, using human waves to advance. As loyal functionaries of a Marxist state, soldiers rarely followed orders and initiative was frowned on as dangerous.

Soviet troops did not leave Hungary until July 1991, but before then there was little fraternisation. The Warsaw Pact was always more about occupation than alliance. Fearful of another 1956-style armed

uprising, the Soviets kept their subject nations at arms length, and the two armies had little to do with one another. Now Soviet operational methods have been replaced by Nato tactics, though the Hungarian troops at Szolnok are still armed with AK-47s, rather than Nato-issue weapons.

"Officers in Warsaw Pact armies didn't have any freedom, even to think," said Captain Tibor Petho, 30. "Western military teaching is that a team leader has to think and take decisions in combat situations. My soldiers are required now to think for themselves."

Capt Petho, a career soldier, is one of the new generation of Hungarian army officers. He trained with the US Marines in Virginia and speaks English,

as do many officers now. He will soon come under the command of a British officer. "It doesn't matter to me that he will be foreign," he says. "He knows exactly what he is doing and how to deploy soldiers."

Just as with politics and business, the winners in the seismic political and economic changes that are reshaping eastern Europe, a decade after the collapse of Communism, will be those who are still young and mentally flexible enough to adapt to new ways of thinking.

Much of the old high command of the three new Nato member nations has retired, the elderly officers unable to accept the death of the Soviet bloc. Now the military future belongs to young officers such as Capt Petho.

Dispute mars Nato's big day

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Independence, Missouri

THE FOREIGN ministers of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland completed their countries' accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation yesterday in a ceremony replete with symbolism - intended and unintended.

The venue was the modest Truman Library on the edge of the equally modest town of Independence, Missouri - Harry Truman's home before and after his presidency. Furnished with the trappings of international meetings, the library was almost overwhelmed.

It was chosen to illustrate the line linking the original treaty, which came into being under Truman's watch 50 years ago, and the accession of the three Central European countries shut out at that time by the descent of the Iron Curtain.

But yesterday there was an absence of Nato dignitaries. The task of receiving the new



members' documents was allotted to Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State, who spoke of the "coming home" of the three nations "to the world they always belonged to".

But the sense of unity and completion the ceremony might have fostered was diminished twice over. The lack of wider interest made it almost a bilateral US-Central Europe meeting. Even in Independence there was scant interest about the event. While some people were amazed Washington should descend on them, others drew unfavourable comparisons between "their" president, who knew where the buck stops, and the present White House occupant. In an unfortunate coincidence, the congressional delegation was

depleted after the late finish of Thursday's debate on deploying US troops in Kosovo. President Clinton believes they can be sent under existing provisions and opposed any debate. But Dennis Hastert, the new House Speaker, has still to establish his authority and could not afford to resist Republican demands for a say. More than 40 Republicans voted with the Democrats to approve sending 4,000 troops to Kosovo but the fact remained that only hours before Nato's mutual security guarantees were extended for the first time to Central Europe, Congress was preoccupied with a debate echoing its first debates about Nato.

The argument, isolationists against Atlanticists, is repeated practically every time a US president wants to commit forces or funds abroad. For the dispute to erupt at that point showed the new Nato members that America still has misgivings about military involvement across the Atlantic.

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Shameful truth of Britain's betrayal of Tibet



A Tibetan woman with a portrait of the Dalai Lama (right), is 'beaten' by a protester dressed as a Chinese soldier during a rally in New Delhi against China's rule. Reuters

THIS AFTERNOON hundreds of Tibetans and their supporters will stand outside the Chinese Embassy in Portland Place, central London and yell 'Free Tibet! China Out!' It is an annual ritual which will be met with extra vigour on the 40th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising against the Chinese occupiers in 1959.

BY SUE LLOYD-ROBERTS

The door of the Embassy will remain closed and apart from the occasional glint of a video camera peeping from a window to record the faces of the demonstrators, it will give every impression of being deserted. The Chinese say there is no case to answer on

Tibet - it is and always has been part of the Motherland.

The demonstrators, some of whom have travelled from India for the occasion, believe London is the appropriate venue in which to vent their frustrations because Britain shares some of the blame for the continued occupation of Tibet. Others admit that Tibet

too was guilty of enabling the Chinese invasion although nothing can justify the brutality that has followed.

Prior to the Chinese invasion in 1950, the Tibetans did not welcome visitors. The tales of nineteenth century travellers are filled with attempts to reach Lhasa, the country's capital, which were foiled by the Dalai

Lama's patrolling scouts. Captain Francis Younghusband, who served in the British army on the North West Frontier, was among the many who dreamed of visiting the city.

With the confidence of a servant of the Raj, he simply got permission from the India Office to invade Tibet in 1904. After that there was a perma-

nent British representative in Lhasa who claimed to promote trade but whose real job was to look out for untoward Russian or Chinese interference.

Apart from the Chinese, the British were the only witnesses to the *de facto* independence which Tibet enjoyed from 1913 until the Chinese crossed the river Dri Chu in

October 1950. Hugh Richardson, now 93 and living in St Andrews, was Britain's man in Lhasa from 1946 to 1950 (after India's independence in 1947, he officially represented the Government of India).

"The Chinese had a small office in Lhasa but it was the same size as our own diplomatic mission", he recalls. "There was no trace of Chinese influence on Tibetan affairs or on the Tibetan Government."

The Tibetan word for foreigner is "Inlie", that is, "English". Apart from the Chinese, the Tibetans knew no other foreign power and, more significantly, no other foreign power knew them. In his recent history of modern Tibet, *The Dragon in the Land of the Snows*, Tsering Shakya says that his people must share the blame for Tibet's diplomatic isolation. Although they enjoyed all the trappings of statehood, the Tibetans did not apply to the United Nations for membership because they did not want to encourage foreigners in Lhasa.

"Safeguarding their religion and customs was all that mattered," Mr Shakya says. "When the radio operator in Chengdu warned Lhasa that the Chinese were on their way, he was told that the Cabinet members could not be disturbed because they were on a picnic."

After the People's Liberation Army invaded to "liberate Tibet from imperialist forces" (there were six Westerners in Tibet at the time), the Tibetans saw the erosion of the authority of their God-King. Monasteries were bombed and hundreds of monks and resistance fighters were killed. When the people of Lhasa believed that the Chinese were planning to kidnap the Dalai Lama in March 1959, they rebelled. The Dalai Lama fled to India and thousands more Tibetans were killed in the brutal reprisals which followed.

It was at this point that the Tibetans called on Britain to help. A delegation travelled to the UN in New York to request a debate on their plight, a move they believed Britain would support. The British made sure the debate never happened.

Mr Richardson, who has written copiously on this sorry episode in Britain's diplomatic history, is still furious. "I believe that the conduct of the British and Indian Governments amounted to an evasion of their moral duty to make plain what they alone had special reason to know - that there was no legal justification for the Chinese invasion of Tibet."

So how do we account for Britain's actions? The govern-

ment, the historians say, was anxious to get rid of its interests in India and there were more urgent problems like Korea and the Cold War to address. "Tibet is redundant to Britain's interests," says a Foreign Office document of the Fifties. "We therefore consider any attempt to intervene in Tibet would be impracticable and unwise. We have no interest in the area sufficiently strong to justify the certain risks involved in our embroiling ourselves with the Chinese on this question."

Mr Shakya says this is still the motivation guiding Britain in its dealings over Tibet.

"Tibet has become one of the great moral issues of our time", he says, "and to appease their constituencies, Tony Blair and Bill Clinton always bring it up when they meet the Chinese leader, Jiang Zemin. But they do it in an embarrassed way saying, 'we're sorry, but we've got to say this, let's get it over



Hugh Richardson: angry at British policy

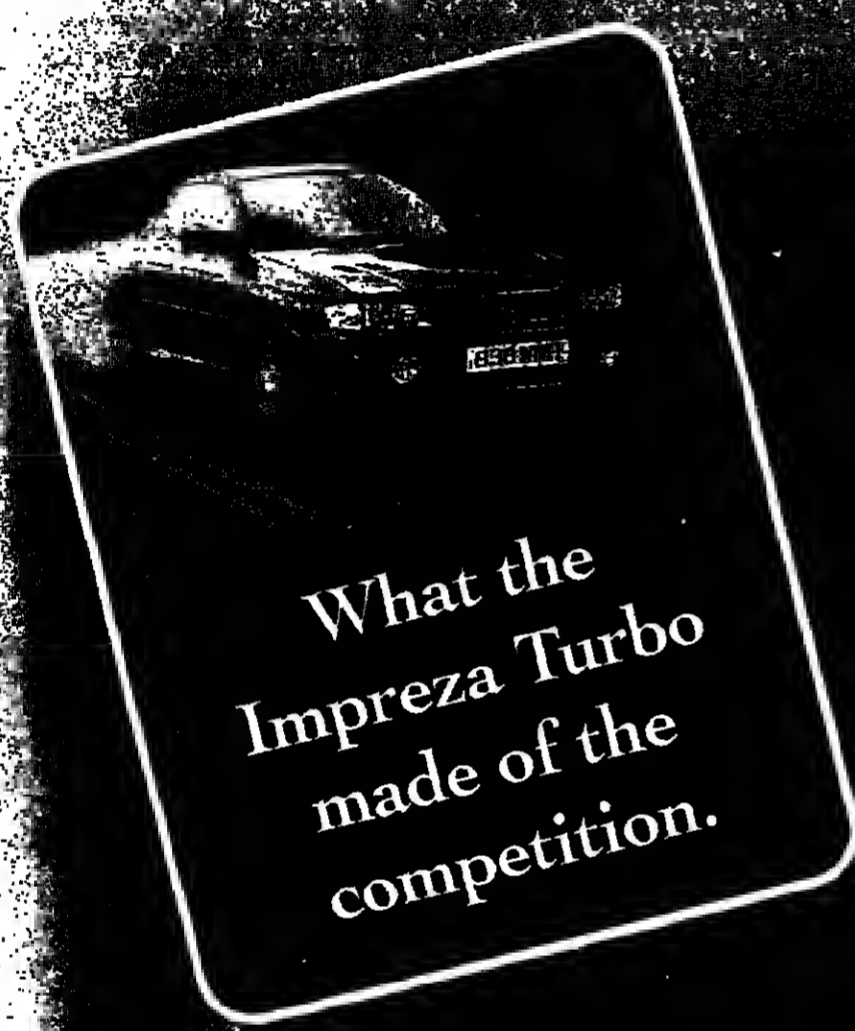
with'. No wonder the Chinese don't take them seriously."

The Dalai Lama says that so long as Britain has no commercial interest in Tibet and China remains a vast potential market, it is all shadow boxing.

Derek Fatchett, the Foreign minister, rejects this. "Yes we could have done more in the past but we have to put all that behind us now. There is not a payoff between the commercial side and human rights. The British Government is robust in championing human rights and the Tibetan culture in our discussions with Beijing and we shall continue to do so."

Hugh Richardson concludes, "Tibet had an ancient civilisation, a deep religious base and a good administration although, on reflection, the monasteries may have exercised too much control. But it deserved to survive. I am very ashamed of Britain. It is too late now."

The protestors outside the Chinese Embassy can shout "Free Tibet! China Out!" until they are hoarse but it is doubtful whether anyone will listen.



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Spice Islands risk starvation

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Jakarta

AFTER SEVEN weeks of bloody battles between Christians and Muslims, the Indonesian Spice Islands are facing a food and refugee crisis, according to a United Nations document obtained by *The Independent*.

The report by the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) says some of the islands have less than two weeks' rice and other essential commodities because the violence has paralysed the distribution system and effectively sealed the islands off from the outside world.

Some 200 people are estimated to have been killed in the violence, but the report reveals a far larger number - 33,000, including children and the elderly - are at risk from food shortages and epidemics.

Police and soldiers opened fire on rioters on the island of Ambon yesterday, following pitched street battles on Wednesday which left at least 12 people dead.

Muslims in Jakarta and on the island of Sulawesi threatened retaliation against Christians and demanded the government bring an end to the killings which have spun out of control since they began in mid-January.

Stocks of milk on Ambon are exhausted, and the number of ships carrying food have fallen from seven to one or two every week, due to fears among traders that their warehouses will be burned in the riots.

Maluku province, known during Dutch colonial times as the Spice Islands, produces cloves and nutmeg, but has to import most of its rice. In the city of Ambon, the market and 700 shops have been razed, paralysing food distribution.

"The situation is serious," said Thomas Keusters, deputy country director for the WFP in Jakarta. The WFP has appealed for donations from the US and Australian governments, and hopes to receive the go-ahead from the Indonesian government on Monday to begin an aid operation.

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Mafia boss run to ground

By FRANCES KENNEDY
in Rome

ITALIAN POLICE say documents found in the hideout of one of the country's most dangerous mafia bosses led them to another mastermind of the run.

Giuseppe Pisciotta was captured in a dawn raid on a luxury villa in the hills of the southern Italian city dominated by the notorious Pisciotta clan.

Along with cases of champagne, the family used to celebrate the elimination of their enemies, the carabinieri seized papers, receipts and diaries.

Pisciotta was one of the key figures of the Calabrian mafia. He was among the most wanted mafiosi in the country.

From the outside, the 44-year-old Pisciotta's hideout looked like an abandoned villa. Inside, however, it was a bunker complete with a generator, a telephone and a television.

The sound of the generator was heard through the steel door. Pisciotta, who attempted to flee through a trapdoor, was arrested.

However, his capture was hampered by helicopters with searchlights hovering above, and he managed to escape.

Pisciotta fled to the French Republic and then to the United States, where he was arrested in 1997.

In addition to his capture, Pisciotta's arrest led to the arrest of several other mafia bosses.

The capture of Pisciotta is a major blow to the Calabrian mafia.

He was arrested in the United States and is now being held in a federal prison.

Pisciotta's arrest is a major victory for Italian police.

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Business & City Editor, Jeremy Warner
News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098

BRIEFING

Takeover report sent to Byers

THE LONG AWAITED report into the £623m takeover of Manchester United by British Sky Broadcasting was yesterday passed to Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, completing a four and a half month investigation. The DTI, which will scrutinise the report, said it was planning to publish its conclusions "as soon as practicable". BSkyB said it expected the report to be published in about four weeks. Both BSkyB and Manchester United restated their belief that the takeover should be allowed to proceed.

Cortecs settles for £1.3m

CORTECS, the biotech company, yesterday announced a £1.3m settlement with Glen Travers, the former chief executive and founder (pictured), claiming wrongful dismissal. The settlement, in respect of two years' salary and benefits, ends a protracted battle following Mr Travers's controversial departure last year. Cortecs will next week publish the results of a wholesale review of its business by PA Consulting, brought in last November after it emerged that two of its drug programmes, Macrotin and Pseudostat, were not running as well as investors were led to believe.

Exports turf war resolved
THE GOVERNMENT is to overhaul its export promotion efforts by bringing together the activities of the Foreign Office and the Department of Trade and Industry under one roof. The British Overseas Trade Board will be replaced by a new organisation called British Trade International whose first chief executive will be the Ambassador to Tokyo, Sir David Wright. The changes, recommended in a report from the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Richard Wilson, are designed to end the turf war between the FCO and DTI.

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Warburg chief quits as losses hit £430m

HANS DE GIER, one of the City's most illustrious bankers, is to retire as chairman and chief executive of Warburg Dillon Reed after 16 years with the firm.

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

His departure comes after a year in which the investment bank reported pre-tax losses of more than one billion Swiss francs (£630m), mostly as a result of exposures to Long-Term Capital Management, the hedge fund.

The losses, which hit during last year's disastrous third quarter, prompted the resignation of Mr De Gier's deputy, as chairman of UBS, WDR's Swiss banking parent, at the height of last autumn's financial crisis in October.

Largely as a result of the difficulties at WDR, UBS yesterday disappointed the markets

with profits before taxes and restructuring charges of \$1.3bn for 1998, a fall of 35 per cent compared with the year before. Marcel Ospel, the group chief executive, denied the timing of Mr De Gier's departure was in any way linked to last year's financial upset. He said that Mr De Gier, 55, had expressed his wish to step down before the UBS and SBC merger was announced in 1997. With this now complete it was the right time for him to leave.

He will be replaced by Markus Granziol, who joined the firm in 1987. In an internal memo circulated to WDR staff, Mr Ospel praised Mr De Gier for his "immense contribution

to the firm. He credited him with having established Warburg Dillon Reed's position as the leading European investment bank. Mr De Gier is still remembered in the City for the ruthless efficiency with which he implemented the takeover of SG Warburg by what was then Swiss Bank Corporation. Since then the firm has been merged twice more - with Dillon Reed, the American investment bank and more recently with UBS, SBC's long-standing Swiss rival which it rescued 18 months ago.

As part of the same top management reshuffle announced yesterday, Gary Brinson, the founder and head of UBS Brinson, UBS's fund management arm, is giving up his management duties to return to the investment side of the business.

His place will be taken by Peter Wulff, currently chief financial officer. David Solo who as chief risk officer oversaw the review of the WDR business after the LTCM debacle, is at his own request moving back to his native US, where he will be put in charge of developing new business for the group in the technology area.

Peter Wulff, the CFO, said that because of the losses at WDR, which left insufficient cash in the bonus pool, the group was having to dig into its merger restructuring reserve to pay out bonuses to Warburg staff.

He said the group was still seeking to acquire businesses in the US, but would consider buying back up to 10 per cent of the bank's stock from share-

holders if it were unable to find a suitable target.

Mr Ospel said that with the merger of UBS and SBC now complete and the review of WDR having resulted in a firm using less capital and more focused on client-related business, the "new UBS" was "on track to meet an ambitious set of growth targets."

He said there was a clear focus on "growth in asset gathering, advisory and asset management business." However, he insisted that UBS was not talking about a major US acquisition but "selectively building up our US sectoral expertise."

"We are on course to for 1999 and we expect a significant profit increase which will bring us close to our return on equity target of 15-20 per cent."

Japan GDP falls for fifth quarter

By DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

THE JAPANESE economy shrank by a record amount in 1998, with GDP falling for an unprecedented fifth quarter in a row at the tail end of the year.

A government spokesman said he thought the recovery would start soon, but most economists predict the slump continuing through this year and into 2000. The yen weakened below ¥120 to the dollar on the news.

Elsewhere, the euro retreated from the levels it touched after the resignation of Oskar Lafontaine, but remained around \$1.09. Shares in Frankfurt soared 6 per cent at one stage, the DAX index passing the 5,000 level. It ended at 5,031.06.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average failed to breach the 10,000 mark, however, despite further good news on the US economy. Shares in London ended nearly 54 points lower at 6,282.2.

The 0.8 per cent drop in Japan's GDP in October-December took it 2.8 per cent down year-on-year. Forecasts expect another 2-2.5 per cent decline in the economy this year.

The slump last year would have been much worse without the government's programme of public works. Public spending contributed 6.7 per cent in growth in the final quarter.

But every other category of national output - private investment, consumer spending, stocks and net trade - made a negative contribution to growth.

Taichi Sakaiya, head of the Economic Planning Agency, said: "With all the measures the government has taken and with interest rates having been cut so low, I personally think consumption will pick up."

But Matthew Wickens at ABN-Amro said: "Much more needs to be done on the policy front to achieve sustained growth."

The Bank of Japan left its policies unchanged after its council meeting yesterday. It will continue to keep the key short-term policy rate of interest close to zero.

Many analysts argue that it will have to take even more aggressive steps to reflate demand - such as buying in government bonds in exchange for newly-issued cash. This would get more money into circulation and would also help reverse the recent upward jump in long-term interest rates.

However, yesterday Japan did take the next step in the reform of its banking system with formal approval of a ¥7.46 trillion injection of public money into 15 top banks.

The Government will buy a combination of preference shares and subordinated debt in the banks, with Fuji Bank getting the biggest amount at ¥1 trillion.

The recapitalisation of the banks is a precondition for an end to the credit crunch. Banks have been unwilling to make loans because of the fragility of their capital ratios.

Even if such measures do help to kick-start an eventual recovery, Japan is overshadowed by longer-term concerns. Its population is ageing more rapidly than that of any other Group of Seven country, and the huge potential pensions bill means the government deficit could explode in future.

End of month deadline for oil merger

By MICHAEL HARRISON
Business Editor

PIERRE JUNGELS, the chief executive of Enterprise Oil, yesterday gave one last push to its merger talks with the rival exploration group Lasso, saying it would be a good move and placing a deadline of the end of this month for a decision.

He was speaking as the oil price sailed back above \$13 a barrel - its highest since November - after oil producers meeting in the Hague pledged to cut global output by 2 million barrels a day.

The sharp fall in oil prices last year was reflected, however, in Enterprise's results. It plunged into loss and passed its final dividend, blaming the one-third decline in the price of a barrel in 1998.

The City is sceptical of the benefits of a merger between Enterprise and Lasso. But Mr Jungels said that he was convinced of the merits of a link-up because the two companies would fit together well strategically and complement each other in terms of cash flow, exploration programmes and geographic spread.

Sir Graham Hearne, the chairman of Enterprise, added that a merger could produce "significant synergies" but Enterprise refused to spell out how big these would be or how many more jobs would disappear.

The two companies have each imposed swingeing job cuts. Enterprise has cut its workforce back to 650 - a reduction of 200 - in a bid to achieve savings of £20m.



An oil rig worker arriving at Enterprise's Nelson platform in the North Sea. The company plunged into loss and passed its final dividend, blaming the one-third decline in the price of a barrel in 1998.

Neville Elder

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Mr Jungels stressed that Enterprise had a viable future as an independent exploration company even if the Lasso talks ended in failure.

Enterprise plunged to a £19.5m loss last year compared with a £255m profit the previous year. Announcing that the final dividend was being scrapped, leaving the payout for the year at 6.9p compared with 17.4p in 1997, Sir Graham said 1998 had

been "the toughest year in the company's history".

Turnover fell by 40 per cent to £563m, three-quarters of the decline being due to lower oil prices and the remainder to lower production because of asset sales.

Analysts had anticipated that Enterprise would pass its final dividend. The shares climbed 6 per cent on the back of the recovery in oil prices in

the last few weeks and relief that losses were not greater.

Mr Jungels said Enterprise was looking actively at pooling some of its North Sea assets. It is also in discussions about buying back a large offshore field in Iran and does not expect to hit any problems with the US, which has threatened sanctions against oil companies doing business with Tehran.

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Barbour Index founder's £22m

PATRICK BARBOUR, the founder of Barbour Index, yesterday pocketed £22m when he sold the supplier of information for the construction industry to Havas, the French media group, writes Peter Thal Larsen.

The deal marks the end of a frantic auction which was sparked last month when Mr Barbour, who will be 65 in July, announced his intention to step down and sell his 42.4 per cent stake in the company.

Mr Barbour founded the company with his brother in 1957 after completing his national service and a two-year spell working as an travelling salesman for Encyclopaedia Britannica. A former director, David Davenport, who retired

five years ago, is set to receive £4.3m for his 8 per cent stake.

Havas won the auction despite intense competition from rival UK companies including Emap, the magazines group, and Lord Holford's United News & Media. The French group, which is a subsidiary of the media and utilities giant Vivendi, is offering 305p per share in cash for Barbour, valuing it at £53m. Shares in Barbour, which have been buoyed by takeover speculation in recent weeks, dropped 25p to 300p.

Brian Griffin, Barbour's chairman, said Mr Barbour and the rest of the board had favoured Havas' bid because it planned to leave the company intact.

Government denies help for US Airways at Gatwick

By PHILIP THORNTON
Transport Correspondent

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday denied it had intervened to help an American airline win landing slots at Gatwick and remove a sticking point in the "open skies" talks after US Airways thanked the White House for resolving the issue.

US Airways' chairman Stephen Wolf caused consternation in Whitehall by thanking "key public officials" for his wining the right to start operating services to Charlotte, Virginia.

Mr Wolf praised the entire Clinton administration, singling out Vice President Al Gore, Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright for providing "vigilant and steady leadership".

One source said Mr Gore had

held talks at "the highest level" while on a visit to the UK. But the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions insisted that ministers had played no part in the decision.

The issues of slots for US Airways and Continental to fly to, respectively, Charlotte in Virginia and Cleveland in Ohio, led to the breakdown of preliminary talks between the two governments over liberalising air travel.

The talks ended without resolution after Britain told the US that under European Union law allocation of runway slots was not in the British government's gift, but was a matter for the industry's own slot scheduling process.

Slots are allocated by an independent committee, Airport Co-ordination Limited, and the implication that the decision resulted from White House pressure could upset rival airlines and the European Commission.

Mr Wolf said he was delighted that US Airways could offer competition on that route. But he added: "This has been a team effort at all levels of government - federal, state and local - in support of the principle of competition in international aviation."

But a DETR spokesman said: "The British Government had no direct involvement in the Gatwick situation. It shows the slot system works for US carriers if they are persistent."

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

ALTHOUGH Footsie achieved a trading high of 6,368.4 points, blue chips were unable to hold their best levels and the index ended 53.5 lower at 6,282.2. Supporting shares were again strong with the mid cap index up 67.5 to 5,560.8. Tomkins, the conglomerate which is due to be relegated from Footsie, led the blue chip leader board with a 28.25p gain to 234.25p; the group intends to undertake a tender offer buy back on Monday. Billiton was up 5.5p to 148p after an investment dinner.

NEW YORK

THE DOW JONES shed early gains to stand slightly down in the early afternoon as traders paused after the recent run towards the 10,000-point level. By mid-afternoon the Dow, which had surged 61 points higher in opening trade, was off 32 points at 9865.

TOKYO

SHARES CLOSED slightly lower, pressured by modest profit-taking following an 11 per cent rally over the past eight days.

HONG KONG

OVERNIGHT GAINS on Wall Street and futures-led trading helped the Hang Seng index break through 10,300 to close up 138.95 at 10,801.76. Brokers said the index was also boosted by Hutchison Whampoa, which rose over 4 per cent on a report that the conglomerate is planning to list on the New York Stock Exchange and may be preparing for acquisitions. Analysts said the 11,000 mark could be tested next week, with investors expecting a cut in interest rates.

FRANKFURT

THE XETRA DAX closed up 5 per cent at 5,031, holding on to its gains after the German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder named Hans Eichel as caretaker finance minister in the wake of Oskar Lafontaine's resignation. Insurance and utility stocks, which stand to be hardest hit by the tax reforms proposed by Lafontaine, rose sharply despite indications that corporate tax loopholes are still under threat. Insurer Allianz rose nearly 14 per cent and the utility RWE added 11.5 per cent.

TOURIST RATES

Oskar's gone but the problems remain

ON THE PRINCIPLE that dullness is the best characteristic a finance minister can have, Hans Eichel has a head start over his controversial predecessor. The euro certainly kept most of its post-Oskar gains yesterday. But how much has the replacement of Red Oskar with a colourless, pragmatic actually changed Germany's and Europe's economic prospects?

The German government was insisting yesterday that the departure of its architect had not toppled the tax plan that caused such uproar among insurers and utilities. Allianz alone said it stood to lose 2.5 billion marks and would move abroad. Although dullard Hans will probably compromise on the corporate tax increase eventually, the stand-off is clearly not yet over.

Another part of the reason for the surge in the euro was the judgement that the ECB will now be able to cut Euroland interest rates to boost growth without appearing to give way to political bullying. German GDP declined in the fourth quarter of last year. Yesterday brought new figures, showing Italy's GDP fell during the same period as well. So the odds



OUTLOOK

on a rate cut must have improved. Not so fast, though. Wim Duisenberg poured cold water on the idea again yesterday, saying governments must put their finances in order first.

Now does Oskar trotting off into the sunset resolve the really fundamental question about Euroland. It was posed by Mr Duisenberg again yesterday: will member governments engage in structural reform to move back the barriers to potential growth? Or to put it in a way guaranteed to annoy our European partners, will the rest of the EU become more Blairite now? Possibly - the biggest obstacle

has gone. But not necessarily. There is still no consensus on the appropriate policy agenda for the EU. We still don't really know whether the euro is going to be allowed to act, as it should, as a catalyst for free market reform across Europe, or whether by contrast it will become a stultifying conduit for centralised tax harmonisation and rigid control of labour and capital markets.

Whatever the answer, the economic management of Euroland has, overnight, become much less problematic. Mr Eichel should make a point of not bullying the ECB and not hectoring his fellow finance ministers. Even if he wants to boost demand the old-fashioned way, he is more likely to get a rate cut if he makes harmony, not harmonisation, his watchword.

Enterprise

IT SAYS something about the unpredictable nature of the oil business that a company can plunge into losses and pass its dividend and yet still see its share price rise by 6 per cent on the day.

Luckily for Enterprise Oil, it chose a day on which there was a general rally in the oil price to ditch the dividend. The price hit a four month high of more than \$13 a barrel after a group of Opec and non Opec producers promised to turn down the gusher and reduce the flood of unwanted oil by two million barrels a day.

Not so long ago the oil price was submerged below \$9 a barrel, so things seem to be looking up. All things are relative, however, and the fact is that Enterprise, in common with many others, is barely profitable even at \$13 a barrel. Moreover, it cannot really rely on the big Opec producers to honour their pledges and bring supply closer to demand, least of all on the likes of Saudi Arabia, which is desperate for the cash.

But Enterprise has fall-back plan. It wants to merge with Lasso, and thereby create one credible (and profitable) independent UK oil exploration and production group. Sir Graham Heston, the Enterprise chairman, sees "significant synergies". The rest of the market is not so convinced and wonders why, if

the advantages are so obvious, Enterprise and Lasso are still trying to tie the knot two months after news of their discussions leaked.

There is of course, a history between the two. Sir Graham tried and failed to acquire Lasso with a smash and grab raid in 1994, claiming haughtily that the time had come to sit at "the big boys table". His nemesis at Lasso, Rudolph Agnew, is gone, but Joe Darby is still there as chief executive, so this time Enterprise's talking is being done by the rather more ebullient Pierre Jungels.

He says he is personally convinced of the merits of a merger and promises an outcome to the talks by the end of this month. But it would be unwise to rely on an Enterprise-Lasso merger, any more than Opec can be relied on to rescue the oil price.

French banking

BRITISH BANKS, we are frequently told, are the best in Europe. Now there is an opportunity to prove it. British bankers have been itching to

get the chance to apply their skills to sorting out France's mollycoddled banks. But for many years, the only allowed route in was through Credit Lyonnais - touted by the French Government to virtually every foreign bank in the world. That was an opportunity everyone felt they could safely ignore. Now there is the possibility of real action.

This week's attempt by France's second biggest bank, Banque Nationale de Paris, to gatecrash the merger between rivals Paribas and Société Générale, has posed a real dilemma for France's financial and business elite.

Do they allow the French bureaucracy to engineer a cosy stitch-up, in which shareholders of the three banks will ultimately be the losers, or do they tell the French Government where to get off? The French authorities seem to want a solution which is in the interests of La France, keeps the foreigners out, and doesn't involve any job losses. The interests of shareholders are neither here nor there.

France has repeatedly flouted both shareholder rights and wider European law by vetoing foreign buy-

ers for French assets, or by allowing them in only on condition that the French end up running the show.

What seems to have triggered the initial SG Paribas deal is that an approach was made by ABN-Amro, the Dutch bank, to Société Générale - through the intermediary of the Dutch central bank ABN-Amro was immediately given the brush off, and the farce of the present French solution thus began.

Barclays and Lloyds have both expressed interest in buying a French bank, but because of Britain's non-participation in the euro they are even more beyond the pale than the Dutch. Even so, it may be worth someone's while to try and bust the whole thing open.

Who better than Sir Brian Pittman, chairman of Lloyds TSB, to show the French what shareholder capitalism really means by taking an open offer for the lot. Is France ready to join the 21st century, or is there to be a retreat into old fashioned corporatism, where shareholders get hung out to dry for the sake of what politicians think are the wider interests of the great republic? There's only one way to find out.

Billiton moves up on hopes for commodity prices

BILLITON, the South African mining giant which this week just managed to hold on to its cherished Footsie place, is again winning over institutional investors after an uncomfortable bear run.

The shares were at one time up 11.5p; they closed 5.5p higher at 148p.

Since interim results last week the group has held a series of presentations and on Thursday evening fund managers attended an investment dinner hosted by Schroders.

CSFB is the latest investment house to turn positive on the shares. It feels commodity prices, which have slumped over the past year, may have bottomed out.

A price improvement may not occur for six months but once it starts it will be rapid and significant. Analyst Alan Richards has moved the shares from hold to an outright buy.

At Thursday's dinner Billiton highlighted the fact that it was highly geared to any upturn in metal prices.

The mining giant, which plans a share buy-back, has out had an altogether happy time since it arrived on the stock market two years ago. The shares almost touched 250p but were down to 98.75p in last year's slump. They

SHARES OF drugs group ML Laboratories were on a high, up 15p to 127.5p following investment presentations. Another round of meetings is planned for next week. The shares are now riding at a year's high, although they touched 465.5p in 1998. WestLB Panmure forecast 400p in two years. The group's Emmelle cream may have significant implications in preventing HIV transmission.

have climbed from around 110p since the start of last month.

The Rio Tinto metals giant has also been in a hole. The shares touched 1,109p before sinking to 566.5p. They rose 22p to 584p, partly reflecting Billiton's form.

Tomkins, the huns to guns conglomerate which is due to lose its Footsie position after a 15-year run, had the distinction of topping the blue chip leader board with a 28.25p gain to 234.25p.

For a time, blue chips were riding at yet another peak. Footsie climbed 29.7 points to reach a new trading high of 6,365.4.

But the effort proved too much. In another day of active trading - with turnover above 1.1 billion shares - the index fell back 33.5 to 6,282.2 as New Yu paused for breath.

Supporting shares were much more determined, underlining the feeling that the dog days on the undercard are coming to an end.

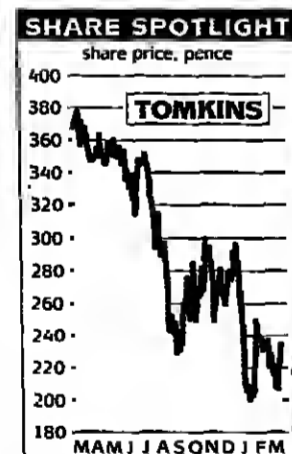
The mid cap index jumped



DEREK PAIN

67.5 to 5,560.8; it is 400 below the peak hit last June. The small cap rose 14.7 to 2,367.8, compared with its high of 2,792.7, established in May. Government stocks, reflecting the Labourite departure, in Germany, made further headway.

Kingfisher, ahead of year's figures next week, rose 11p to 800p, a peak. In an effort to underline its European connections, the results will be presented in Paris by the group's top brass, including the chief executive, Sir Geoff Mulcahy.



The London show is likely to be a downbeat affair by comparison. BT Alex Brown expects Kingfisher's profits to be £559.2m, up 11 per cent, with the Darty French operation making the strongest headway.

Ripples continued from the Prudential Corporation descent on the M&G unit trust group. Halifax rose 27.5p to 796.5p and Lloyds TSB added 11p to 991p. The Pru fell a further 19.5p to 779p.

The latest disappointment from Reckitt & Colman, the third in a year, left the household goods group's shares 41p off at 732.5p. Reed International fell again on its results, off 32.25p to 55.25p.

Enterprise Oil, still talking about a possible merger with Lasso, put on 19.75p to 341.25p following its figures. Confirmation of intended Opec production cuts had little impact, with many wondering whether it has the ability to deliver lower output.

Commerzbank also hit sentiment downgrading its stance on the leading oil stocks. BP Amoco, off 46p at 973.5p, is now rated as a sell; Shell, suffering the same treatment, was off 10p at 386.75p.

Servisair, the support group, shaded 2p to 229p as Amey, the construction group, abandoned its bid intentions following the intervention of Pénauille, the French group, which confirmed it had the support of almost 50 per cent of the capital.

Barlow Index collected a bid but it was not what the market expected. The shares fell 25p to 300p as the supplier of specialist information accepted a 30p-a-share offer from another French group, the publisher Havas.

Tracker Network, the vehicle security group, motor 57.5p to 510p as a possible management buyout appeared on the horizon.

Regal Hotels fell 3p to 26p following a cautious trading statement accompanying a 15 per cent profits increase. The pub chain JD Wetherspoon frothed 30p higher to 257.5p on its figures.

A profit warning from Weather Action dampened the shares 15p to 32.5p; they were 97p last autumn. The Scotch whisky group Glenmorangie was also on the rocks. A profits warning left the "A" shares nursing a 102.5p fall with the "B" shares off 155p at 672.5p.

Meconic, the chemical group, also produced the pre-

BANDT, the old Brown & Tawse construction group, could be a takeover target. There is talk of a bid being lined up but any strike may be held back until after the results for the year ending next month are known.

It has traded well and around £7.5m is expected against £5.4m last time. Institutions are heavy in the shares which have been up to 45p in the past 12 months.

dictable reaction with a 14.5p fall to 117.5p after a warning about its results.

Eurotunnel, for long dead in the water, rallied 11p to 98.5p on hopes that it will roll out its first profit on Monday. It could produce around £60m, although exceptional items linked to the group's debt restructuring would be largely responsible. Still such a performance would compare with a £611m loss last time.

The market's fascination with surfing the Internet was illustrated yet again by a 10p gain to 51.5p by Novara, a supplier of education and scientific products. It has got in on the act by buying a 33.3 per cent interest in DIALnet, involved in Internet networking services for education.

Proteus International, the healthcare group, rose 2.5p to 35p in busy trading; there is talk of a link-up announcement next week.

SEAQ VOLUME: 1.1 billion
SEAQ TRADES: 84,921
GILTS INDEX: n/a



Dr Andrew Millar has launched a libel action objecting to statements made on British Biotech's website

Millar adds libel writ to British Biotech dispute

HOPES OF a settlement in the bitter legal row between British Biotech and its former head of clinical research Dr Andrew Millar faded this week as Dr Millar issued a writ for libel against the drug discovery company.

Despite recent offers of a £120,000 settlement by the company, the case looks set for the High Court this summer.

British Biotech sacked Dr Millar last April after he "blew the whistle" to investors over his concerns about the progress of drug tests. He discussed with shareholders two trials of the company's star drugs, Marimastat and Zecutor, for pancreatic cancer. The sacking prompted a huge row

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

between Dr Millar and the company's then chief executive, Keith McCullagh, who has also subsequently left the company.

The company was the first to launch legal action, suing Dr Millar last June for breach of contract and breach of confidence. He then counter-claimed for wrongful dismissal and defamation.

Dr Millar sought "substantial damages," understood to be at least £180,000.

Now Dr Millar has launched a second legal action claiming damages for libel. He is objecting to statements made by the company on its Internet website

(www.britbio.co.uk) on 4 August last year on the "Business Review" page under the heading "Product Development".

He is also suing over statements made in a press release on 20 August titled "Regulatory Update". He is also objecting to comments contained in the company's first-quarter results announcement on 23 September and in its second-quarter results on 13 November.

Dr Millar said the offending words were "published to the media, the ... [company's] shareholders and the general public."

A source close to Dr Millar said they expected this week's writ to be consolidated into the

existing legal action and to be tried at the same time, either in June or after the summer break, in October.

"Money is not the issue," the source said. "It's the rights and wrongs of what Dr Millar did. As the case goes on our confidence in his case increases steadily."

A spokeswoman for British Biotech said yesterday: "The litigation is ongoing and therefore we can't comment."

Elliot Goldstein, chief executive of British Biotech, has said in the past that he would like to settle the action out of court. It is understood that a month ago the company offered Dr Millar £120,000.

Reckitt cuts costs to halt profit fall

BY ANDREW VERITY

RECKITT & COLMAN, the troubled household products company, yesterday launched a worldwide cost-cutting exercise in an effort to halt a dramatic fall in profits which has wiped half the value from its shares in the last year.

The Lemsip-to-lavatory cleaner group, still searching for a chief executive after last month's departure of Vernon Sankey, will slash between £30m and £40m from its overheads by cutting an unspecified number of jobs and ordering plant closures.

Reckitt's executives yesterday bared their soul to the City, admitting to mistakes caused by "taking our eye off the ball" in North America. Operating profit fell by 16 per cent to £319.7m, excluding a £31m hit for Y2k problems.

"We are unhappy with our performance in North America and necessarily we must get it right," said Michael Tuller, acting chief executive and a candidate for the permanent post.

Reckitt was trounced in the US by its arch-rival Clorox, which launched an innovative spray-cleaner for shower units and a fragrant all-purpose cleaner. "We were just too slow with our new products - particularly in the bathroom and all-purpose cleaner segments," Mr Tuller added.

Profit margins in the US, where Reckitt had prided itself on being a brand leader, fell from 17.2 to 15 per cent. Reckitt was also caught out by massive destocking, caused by a new trend to ordering goods electronically as they are sold.

Dividends rose 5.4 per cent to 15.8p but shares plunged 5 per cent to 732.5p.

Merrill points to turnaround at revamped 'Independent'

THE INDEPENDENT and Independent on Sunday are today described as "a turnaround story" in a substantive new investment circular by Merrill Lynch on the titles' parent company Independent Newspapers.

Pointing to the year-on-year circulation rise achieved by the daily title in February - the first such rise in three years - the investment bank expresses the view that "under single ownership by a group with proven management ability, The Independent's performance can be improved".

It says break-even for the titles is anticipated in three years' time, with circulation targets of 250,000 for the daily and 300,000 for the Sunday.

BY OUR CITY STAFF

Independent Newspapers acquired full control of the two newspapers just over a year ago.

Overall, Merrill estimates that Independent Newspapers is 35 per cent undervalued against other European and UK newspaper groups, making it the best-value publishing stock followed by the US securities house.

Returning to the group's two UK national titles, Merrill says: "Editorial changes have improved circulation and advertisers continue to be attracted by the papers' young, urban, affluent readership base. The Independent titles have now been fully integrated into the group's existing UK operations."

"The primary objectives of the new management were firstly to put more copies of the paper into circulation (increased sampling through price promotion and special offers, etc) and secondly to improve the editorial quality and content to appeal to both existing and new readers."

The losses at The Independent and Independent on Sunday have been a factor depressing the share price of the parent company over the last six months. However, Merrill gives an upbeat verdict on the outlook. It reckons losses in the group's UK operations as a whole will narrow to £182.8m in 1999. It expects UK operations to be back at break-even in 2,000, rising to a profit of £182.8m the year after.

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
Cash Conversion Ltd (N)	AUD 9.8m (8.5m)	0.150m (0.236m)	0.030c (4.00c)	-	-	-
Guaranteed Properties (N)	-	3.14m (4.13m)	0.230c (0.023c)	-	-	-
Guaranteed Holdings (N)	-	0.122m (0.087m)	0.100c (0.070c)	-	-	-
Johnson Services Group (N)	180.35m (191.50m)	17.77m (17.47m)	31.07p (16.86p)	14.3p (12.6p)	04.05.99	22.03.99
Portsmouth Holdings (N)	30.35m (24.80m)	0.020m (0.051m)	2.25p (1.18p)	1.25p (1.18p)	05.07.99	04.05.99
Reckitt & Colman (N)	2.29m (2.20m)	227.8m (202.5m)	40.5p (35.17p)	1.50p (1.25p)	01.06.99	04.05.99
Reed International (N)	117.15m (111.73m)	20.02m (17.48m)	4.54p (3.77p)	2.40p (2.70p)	01.06.99	04.05.99
Tay Homes (N)	65.57m (63.84m)	1.02m (1.17m)	1.02m (1.17m)	1.02m (1.17m)	01.06.99	04.05.99
Waco Group (N)	102.26m (144.50m)	38.48m (27.70m)	56.0p (33.40p)	16.10p (1.10p)	01.06.99	04.05.99
Westminster Partnership (N)	-	1.12m (0.722m)	3.50p (3.50p)	1.50p (1.50p)	21.04.99	23.03.99
21 Westminster (N)	121.20m (98.02m)	11.51m (12.73m)	2.26p (2.40p)	0.50p (0.70p)	13.05.99	13.05.99
Westminster Newspapers (N)	62.90m (53.93m)	2.72m (1.28m)	0.40p (0.23p)	1.20p (1.10p)	20.05.99	04.05.99

(N) - Final (I) - Interim *Before Exceptions

هذا من الأصل

SPORT

Boxing: The champion with a love for chess expects to go from pawn to king of the heavyweight division tonight

Lewis faces defining moment

RICHARD
WILLIAMS
IN NEW YORK

THE TROUBLE with Lennox Lewis, according to Emanuel Steward, his trainer, is that he plays too much chess. "Chess ties up too much time," Steward said this week as he prepared Lewis to confront Evander Holyfield for the undisputed heavyweight championship of the world in New York tonight. "You have to think too much. Lennox is gonna have missiles firing at him, specially in this fight. There's gonna be bombs flying all over the place. You can't sit down and say, 'Let me pull out my chess board and figure this out.' No, he really has got to be instinctive."

And there the problem appears to begin and end for a fighter, born in West Ham of Jamaican parents, and raised in Canada, who hopes to wake up tomorrow morning as the first bearer of a British passport to hold the undisputed title. Lewis is a physical giant, his record shows only one defeat in 34 fights as a pro, and almost three months of training and eating his beloved mother's fish, rice, dumplings and beans must surely have brought him to peak condition for the biggest night of his life - the fight that, he says, will "define" him. But it is his capacity for the instinctive response, the spontaneous initiative, that harms his chances in the eyes of experts. Including, evidently, those of his own trainer.

Steward is a highly experienced and respected figure who would probably still be in Holyfield's corner had they not fallen out over the question of remuneration several years ago. He has plenty of praise for his current charge, but also plenty of warnings. When he talked about how he planned to persuade Lewis to make more use of his excellent left jab at Madison Square Garden tonight, for instance, he became almost fatalistic. "We've talked about it, we've worked on it, now he's gotta do it," he said. "I'm finished."

The problem is simply to get a good-natured man to come out fighting. "Lennox Lewis has to come out and establish his strength, physical and mental, in the fight," Steward said. "This is a weird fight to figure out. You can't say who's going to assume what role. It's not like Ali and Frazier, where you know who's going to do what. So he's got to come out and be prepared to stand up, and the first opportunity he gets he's got to let his missiles fly. He's a big man. He can't hesitate."

Hesitation - call it circumspection, if you want to be kind - is widely seen as Lewis's weakness. Anyone who watched him get pushed around by Frank Bruno for five rounds at Cardiff Arms Park one chilly autumn night back in 1993 could be forgiven for continuing to harbour suspicions about his ability to take matters into his own hands, and the possibility that he will greet the bell for the start of a world title fight by waiting for the other man to make the first move is even supported by his own words. "This fight could take different avenues," he said this week. "One can never really tell what's going to happen until we get in there." And it is clearly a source of exasperation to his trainer, although the criticisms



Emanuel Steward holds the pads as Lennox Lewis fires away in training for tonight's world heavyweight unification contest with Evander Holyfield at Madison Square Garden.

come wrapped in careful expressions of optimism.

"I'm very satisfied with the improvement in Lennox generally," Steward said. "If he comes out and fights to his potential, he is physically too powerful for Holyfield. But the improvement has not shown in the fights consistently. He and Evander both have been inconsistent heavyweight champions. There's never been that solid domination like there was with Ali or Frazier. Lennox can have a great fight against Tommy Morrison, and then come back and have a real life-and-death against Ray Mercer. Even in the second fight with Oliver McCall he was still reluctant. The guy was crying, but Lennox still wouldn't step it up."

Lewis, of course, denies the charge. "I'm going to beat Evander in every possible way," he said. "I'm going to out-think him, out-box him, and out-punch him." But within moments of that assertion the sceptics were groaning at his response to a question about whether or not he had a game plan. "No," he said. "I'm just going to let the fight unfold. We're both professionals and the fight could take different avenues. I'm very flexible in that, so I'll have to see what happens. This is the first time I'm fighting Evander and the first time he's fighting me, and we've both got different styles, so we're going to have to see how they adapt to each other, how

they complement each other in the ring."

Delivered in Lewis's calm, almost other-worldly tones, these are exactly the kind of sentiments that lead some to conclude that he lacks the kind of warrior's heart that his opponent tonight so clearly possesses. "Evander has a great heart," he agreed. "But I don't think my heart should be questioned."

Frank Maloney, Lewis's chirpy little manager, backs his fighter's claim. An early assault from Holyfield, he believes, could play into Lewis's hands. "It may even Lennox up. But I don't think there's a problem. People say he's a slow starter, because he got caught by

Shannon Briggs in the first round, and by Oliver McCall, but he knocked Andrew Golota out in 93 seconds, and he's knocked a few other guys out in the first couple of rounds."

What about the pasting he took at the hands of Bruno, before finally waking up? "I think Lennox felt he just had to walk in there and hit Bruno and it would be all over. You've got to remember that when Frank Bruno fought Lennox Lewis he raised his game by at least 100 per cent. If he'd boxed like that when he fought Mike Tyson the second time, he'd still be world heavyweight champion."

To some extent, Lewis is an

enigma. His past record looks like a history of contradictions. He beat Riddick Bowe for the Olympic super-heavyweight gold medal at the Seoul Olympics in 1988 and knocked out Razor Ruddock in the second round four years later, but struggled against lesser fighters.

"Lennox is a strange guy," Steward confirmed. "But I will say this for him. When it comes down to the few situations where he has been involved in big fights, he's gone to another level. I will give him credit for that. Regardless of how he looks in training, if there's a big fight he's very aggressive."

Stories emanating from inside the training camp have been notably

conflicting. One tale this week had Lewis being severely embarrassed by a sparring partner. But Steward switched into cheerleading mode when he described the fighter's mood. "He's been extremely happy and confident. He's just like a little kid. From the day that the fight was signed he's been bubbling over with excitement. I just cannot see all of that energy and enthusiasm just disappearing."

Every fighter, Steward continued, had one fight that he wanted above all others. "Evander always wanted Mike Tyson. He has a thing about hoolies, especially short ones. Even when I was training him for his second fight against Riddick Bowe, all he could talk about was Tyson. That was the fight he always wanted. And Lennox has always wanted to fight Evander Holyfield. He's been totally obsessed with it. This is his opportunity, and I think he's going to shine. It's going to be a great fight, win or lose. I feel he should win it, but even if he loses it I can assure you it's going to be a war. There's no way I'm going to be working with anyone who's going to lose a fight as a coward."

For a trainer to use a phrase such as "win or lose" on the eve of a fight is remarkable in itself, but Steward quickly covered his words with more hopeful effusions. "I do feel that if Lennox comes out and fights to his potential, he's physically too powerful for Evander Holyfield,"

he said. "And he's a natural athlete, which you guys [the media] keep overlooking. He's not a Riddick Bowe. That brute strength and the burning desire he has to gain respect, and the knowledge that this is the first and only chance, that this is it, will carry him to victory. It's all gotta happen in this fight, or he can forget it. There's no other fights, no other second chances. It's like the end of the world for him."

And that, at last, was more like the Lewis camp's line. "He's in great shape, both mentally and physically," Maloney said. "He looks sharp, he's so focused for this fight. I think he's a danger to the whole human race at the moment. He could walk through walls, the condition he's in. I've said that I think Lennox is going to win in seven rounds. Inside me, I think it could even be over shorter."

For Lewis, who missed out on his first shot at the undisputed title in 1992, when Riddick Bowe tossed the WBC belt into the nearest rubbish bin, a seven-year itch is almost over. "It's been out of my reach for a while," he said. "Now it's finally here, and I can prove that all those fighters who've been ducking me all these years were ducking me for a reason. I'm very confident in my own ability. I love being the underdog. And this is my time." And what about Manny Steward? "I'm going to teach him the game of chess."



'He's in great shape mentally and physically. He looks sharp, he's so focused for this fight. I think he's a danger to the human race at the moment'
Frank Maloney

Pugilistic predictions are liable to be painful

A RETIRED sportswriter of my acquaintance suffered acutely from dyspepsia whenever called upon to predict the outcome of a prizefight. This uncomfortable condition was brought on by fear of being held up to ridicule in his local hostelry. "If I get it wrong those guys will jump all over me," he would groan.

The worst day in this fellow's working life was unquestionably 22 January 1973 when George Foreman scored a surprise second-round technical knockout over Joe Frazier in Kingston, Jamaica, to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world. Only two of his fellow pundits had got it right but this was of no consolation to him. "I'm supposed to know something about boxing, and I do [he was not with-

KEN JONES

out ego] but who's going to take my word now?" he sighed.

This springs to mind from the fact that there has been no expert unanimity in the analysis of tonight's collision between Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield at Madison Square Garden. Faced by the reliable chime of prediction, most of the fellow toilers I have spoken with sought endorsement of a lightly held opinion.

A terrific American boxing writer, the late Bob Waters of *Newsday*, was better at arriving at the correct conclusion about big fights

than anyone I have ever come across. Setting all emotion aside he relied entirely on logic and instinct. Boxing writers have achieved temporary fame by taking a fling against the odds but Waters wasn't one of them.

Waters had a remarkable record. Back in the Fifties he forecast Ingemar Johansson's third-round knockout of Floyd Patterson when anyone who favoured the Swede was thought to have taken leave of their senses. He then predicted correctly that Patterson would regain the title by knocking out Johansson with a left hook in the fifth round of a re-match.

Great experience was at the core of Waters' judgement. An amateur boxer in his youth, he once took part

in an exhibition bout with the great middleweight champion Tony Zale on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific during the Second World War. Toward the end of the first round he landed a right cross that took advantage of Zale's generosity. "Cut my gloves off," Waters said on returning to his corner. "That mother says he's going to kill me and I believe him."

Waters wasn't among the many who were required to eat their words when the then Cassius Clay caused a huge upset in February 1964 by stopping Sonny Liston for the heavyweight title. He'd got it right again as he did when Liston was knocked out in the re-match.

The best was to come. Deaf to the fears that were held out for Ali in 1975

before he went up against Foreman in Zaire for the title, Waters predicted one of the most sensational results in boxing history.

Waters' strike-rate was so good that it became a burden. "If I pick the wrong guy my editor blames it on the booze," I remember him saying one night in Glasgow.

Down the years, I have tried many times to benefit - without his expertise - from the formula Waters applied to prediction. Place the attributes of both men alongside every known weakness. Go back over past performances for evidence of technical flaws and shortcomings in temperament. Remember that contrasting styles can be important. Never overlook desire. Who appears to want it the most? Don't fall

into the trap of any emotional involvement.

The main thing held out against Lewis (unfairly to my mind) on this side of the Atlantic is that he first gained the World Boxing Council title by mail after Riddick Bowe cast it into a garbage can. The question "who has he fought?" is central to the fact that only two American writers have publicly declared their support for Lewis.

However, Holyfield's record can be misleading. But for the 20-minute delay caused when a man and his paraglider dropped into the ring in Las Vegas six years ago, he would probably have lost three out of three against Riddick Bowe who, in common with Lewis, had a distinct physical advantage. Holyfield's two

victories over Mike Tyson were seen as further proof of a remarkable will, but he was up against a shot heavyweight of similar physical stature to himself.

Holyfield's uncharacteristic prediction of a knockout victory in the third round, based on an unshakeable belief in divine intervention, could work against him. "Hey, if Lewis is still there after three, Holyfield may figure out that God has gone to a basketball game," somebody said.

There is still rather too much of the amateur left in Lewis but the view held here, although not without great confidence, is that he will take the chance to be remembered as a significant figure in the heavyweight division.

Weakened Tigers in test of title credibility

EDGY, VERY edgy. Leicester put their title credentials on the line at Northampton this afternoon and there is not the slightest guarantee that they will survive the triple-whammy awaiting them. By tradition, East Midlands derbies are fraught, mean-spirited affairs and today's little gathering will be no different. But the Premiership favourites go into this one with three unusually large monkeys clinging to their tiger-striped backs: they have not won at Franklin's Gardens

RUGBY UNION
BY CHRIS HEWETT

since the Saints returned to big-league rugby in 1996, their England forwards are slap in the middle of a bugle demanding Five Nations campaign and their first-choice half-backs have disappeared from view. Any hopes that Austin Healey might have returned to the fray after his notorious dalliance with a horizontal Kevin Puri during the Leicester

London Irish match were blown out of the water by the Rugby Football Union disciplinary tribunal, who this week increased the scrum-half's 21-day suspension by rather more than 100 per cent. Then came a second body-blow in the shape of Joel Stranksy's knee. The former Springbok stand-off will undergo key-hole surgery next week and may well miss the bulk of the Premiership run-in. The player-coach's absence means another outing in the No 10 shirt for Pat Howard and

while the 25-year-old Australian is nobody's fool when it comes to the art of play-making, he is no Stranksy either. Without their No 1 goal-kicker and organiser-in-chief, Leicester failed to subdue a pumped-up Richmond outfit in the cup a fortnight ago. Given the local rivalry and the fact that Northampton have Premiership ambitions of their own, the visitors will experience twice the degree of heat this afternoon. It will be fascinating to see how the respective captains,

Martin Johnson and Tim Rodber, approach what is certain to be a molten confrontation; after all, it was only seven days ago that they joined forces against the Irish in Dublin. "There can be no bigger club game than this in English rugby," said Rodber yesterday. "If Northampton had access to a 20,000-capacity stadium, I've no doubt there would be 20,000 people in it. This is a huge occasion and a huge challenge for us."

Whatever the outcome, the Northampton players can start digging out their passports for a European Cup adventure next season: agreement on an English return to the competition is likely to be confirmed at a European Rugby Cup board meeting on 1 April and with 26 points in the bag, Rodber and company would have to go pear-shaped to miss out. However, seven other clubs are still in with a chance of claiming the remaining places assumed to be on offer and four of them are in head-on collision this weekend. London Irish and Wasps, re-

spectively fourth and fifth in the table, indulge themselves in another bout of high-speed power play at Loftus Road tomorrow - their last meeting in Shepherd's Bush a fortnight ago made ice hockey look like a Terry Griffiths snooker match - and there are changes to both line-ups. Wasps are without Josh Lewsey and Rob Henderson, so Gareth Rees starts at full-back with Mark Denney filling the gap in the centre. The Irish bring Mike Howe and Kris Fullman into their front

row at the expense of Richard Kirke and Rob Hardwick while Kevin Spicer gets a back row place ahead of Isaac Fes'uni. Bath meet Richmond with a potentially dangerous side captained by Jeremy Guscott. The west country men boast a back line of Perry, Balshaw, Guscott, Maggs, Adebayo, Catt and Cooper and given that a treasured European place depends on them finding some late-season form, the 1998 Heineken Cup winners should be suitably inspired.

Clarke relishes survival fight

Richmond's rise has turned sour but the players, at least, refuse to let the dream die on the field.
By Chris Hewett

THEY CALLED it the Richmond Experiment and like so many experiments down the ages, Ashley Levett's audacious attempt to invent a designer all-star team for the new professional age has gone up in smoke, leaving behind it blackened faces by the dozen, singed eyebrows by the score and a filthy great hole where the roof used to be. Those players and back-room staff who still have a job are earning a lot less money doing it and while a leaner, meaner Richmond could yet rise from the ashes of a hundred broken dreams, the events of the last nine days nevertheless represent a dark moment in the fortunes of the English club movement.

Levett's snap decision to cut and run after sinking a cool £5m into reviving the long-forgotten London dinosaur he exhumed three years ago, follows hard on the heels of Sir John Hall's dash for the shadows at Newcastle. Almost at a stroke, the professional game has lost two of its pioneering investors. Who next? Frank Warren wants out of Bedford, Tony Tiaris is offloading London Scottish to Bristol and Chris Wright has frequently bemoaned his lot at Wasps. Much to the delight of rugby's "we too" you so traditionalists, the money men are pulling out of town and heading for their villas in the hills.

Suddenly, the united front presented by the clubs' umbrella organisation, English First Division Rugby, appears to be precisely that: a front. The muscle-flexing pressure group that mounted a legal challenge to the International Board's rulebook, boycotted the European Cup and fought two years of trench warfare with the most powerful forces in the world game now looks like a seven-stone weakling.

"When Sir John turned his back on the sport after insisting he was in for the duration, he definitely sent out a signal to the rest," said one source this week. "His departure made it easier for Ashley to pull out. There was no longer any shame attached to walking away. Some of those investors who do not come from a strong rugby background now see no reason why they should keep pumping money into a game that has given them nothing but grief."



Ben Clarke, the inspirational England back-row forward, ponders the financial difficulties that are a sign of the times at Richmond

John Gichigi/Allsport

Indeed, much of the current grief is to be found within the ranks of EFDR itself. It was no coincidence that Levett returned his wallet to his inside pocket within a week of Tom Walkinshaw, the Gloucester owner and EFDR chairman, announcing that the elite clubs would begin next season's Premiership programme in September and play, albeit under-strength, through the World Cup. Walkinshaw's comments infuriated a number of investors, including Nigel Wray of Saracens. For Levett, the proverbial camel's back was now carrying one straw too many. Frustrated, disillusioned and almost terminally cheesed off with the politics of incompetence, he reached for the plug and pulled hard.

All this on the eve of a Premiership match the Richmond staff - at least, those that are left following Wednesday's purge by the financial consultants called in to take a bottom-line view of the business - confidently expect to attract the highest crowd in the 138-year

history of the club. Bath, this afternoon's visitors at the Madejski Stadium, are going through a trough of their own - new contract negotiations at the Recreation Ground are said to be particularly brutal, with players being asked to agree salary cuts of up to one third - but that has not stopped the match generating its own commercial momentum. "We sold every

"Too much time and energy have been invested in Richmond to let it wither and die. I want the squad to come across in the right way. In many ways, the club will stand or fall on our contribution as players"

hospitality package mooms ago," said one Madejski insider. "Sadly, we're not at all sure whether there are enough people left at the club to cope with the occasion."

Not surprisingly, the very mention of Levett's name provokes mixed feelings amongst the Richmondites. Few are willing to damn the multi-millionaire copper trader and full-time tax exile unreservedly - after

all, it was his money that gave Richmond a team full of big names and a place in the Premiership elite, not to mention a forthcoming Telford's Bitter Cup semi-final with Newcastle - but there again, few are eager to sing his praises. "He certainly chose a bad moment to jump ship," groaned one member of the back-room staff this week. "We thought we knew

him, we thought he was with us. This has come as a real smack in the guts."

Not least to Ben Clarke. In his way, Clarke was every bit as fundamental to the Richmond project as Levett's credit card; certainly, he was more, far more, than a big-name player and an inspirational leader. His decision to leave Bath and commit himself to the new venture effectively put the whole show

on the road, his arrival pre-empting the ambitious Loo-doners with a magnet powerful enough to attract the likes of Scott Quinnell, Barry Williams, Agustin Pichot and Allan Bateman. Had Clarke stayed in the West Country, Levett might well be £3m better off.

But Clarke did not earn universal respect as a "player's player" by curling himself into

a ball at the first sign of trouble. "This has been difficult, terribly difficult, for everyone involved," he admitted this week. "A lot of people have poured their hearts and souls into this club and I can't pretend that the events of the last few days haven't hurt. But at times like this, the real professionals stand up to be counted. As far as I'm concerned - and I know I speak for the rest of the play-

ing squad - the most important thing now is to react in a positive fashion, take our responsibilities on board and perform on the field, where it really counts."

"Too much time and energy have been invested in Richmond to let it wither and die. I want the squad to come across in the right way. In many ways, the club will stand or fall on our contribution as players. As well as our cup semi-final, which is probably the biggest game in the history of the club, we have some tremendous Premiership matches - Saracens, Wasps and Northampton all have to come to the Madejski. Of course I wish we had shown more consistency in the league; people come to watch a winning side, after all. However, we have to believe that a run of good victories now will help turn things around."

Just at the moment, Richmond are not a pretty sight; bruised, battered and bloody, they look like an English heavy-

weight contender on a bad night in Madison Square Garden. But with more than 30 redundancies already announced and the pay cuts swiftly implemented, the worst may be behind them. The hunt is on for new investors and most of the smart money - none of it belonging to Levett - says the club will survive and thrive as a Premiership concern.

"People are talking about us taking the so-called 'golden parachute' offered by EFDR and turning our back on Premiership status, but that's not the way we see it," said Malcolm Ball, the sales and marketing director. "I still believe we can make rugby work in the Thames Valley. I still hold to the ambition that brought me here in the first place: that we will be playing a Toulouse or a Brive in a European Cup final within three years and taking on the Auckland Blues or the Natal Sharks at the Madejski within five. I know this sounds strange given the week we've just endured, but we feel good about the future."

WRU turn to talking sweet

SEVEN MONTHS after the event the bright sparks at the Welsh Rugby Union have finally decided to negotiate their way out of the ungodly mess involving the two strongest clubs in the country, Cardiff and Swansea, writes Chris Hewett.

Far from attempting to beat their high-profile rebels into submission with a big stick, the WRU are now keen to sweet-talk them back into the fold and thereby solve the most damaging domestic dispute in the history of the red-shirted game.

A four-man WRU team including the president, Sir Tasker Watkins, the chairman Glamorgan Griffiths, the secretary Dennis Gethin and, most significantly, the national team manager David Pickering, will meet representatives of both clubs next week amid high hopes that a lasting agreement can be reached.

Neither Cardiff nor Swansea have played Welsh Premiership rugby this season - they exiled themselves after refusing to sign 10-year loyalty agreements - but they have reached the quarter-finals of the cup, in which they meet Pontypool and Ebbw Vale respectively.

While the WRU agreed to suspend both clubs for failing to pay £150,000 fines arising from their unsanctioned matches with English opposition, it was a purely cosmetic measure. "The intention is to solve the current situation," Griffiths said yesterday. He declined to divulge details of any proposals, but it seems certain that the WRU will tempt the renegades with so-called "super club" status, which would virtually guarantee them top level European Cup rugby next season as well as a handsome financial incentive from the union.

Pontypool and Llanelli have been confirmed as "super clubs" and the national coach, Graham Henry, is keen to get the two big guns back on board in a similar capacity.

The Welsh decision to embrace the "super club" concept has caused something of a furore in Scotland. The Scottish Rugby Union wants its own super twosome, Glasgow Celticians and Edinburgh Reivers, to forge close playing links with their brethren from the Principality next season, much to the disgust of the clubs in the Scottish Premier League. "We are totally opposed to this," said Brian Simmers, the Glasgow Hawks chairman, yesterday. "The SRU focus should be on rugby in Scotland, not Wales."

Hell in Havana tracking the Horse

THEY CALLED Alberto Juantorena, the Cuban double Olympic champion of 1976, "El Caballo" - the Horse. I prefer it was because of the length of his stride.

Unless, of course, that immortal piece of BBC TV commentary by the late Ron Pickering - "And now Juantorena opens his legs and shows his class" - was closer to the mark than... But no, I expect it was the stride length. That was what I tried to keep thinking when I met him.

In retrospect, our meeting - at the Sport City complex in Havana - was unusual, given that the great man was 100 kilometres away at the time. That was, according to the Cuban officials whom I had telephoned with increasing desperation in the preceding days.

"Señor Juantorena has gone away on vacation," I was told. "One hundred kilometres away." "I am sorry," I was told. "Señor Juantorena is



MIKE ROWBOTTOM

no longer in Havana. He is on vacation." And how far...? "One hundred kilometres."

They seemed so certain about the distance, these officials. It was almost enough to make a person suspicious - that is, a person whose faculties were not over-manned by a rising sense of panic. As mine were.

My airy plan to stay on after Havana's staging of the 1992 World Cup of athletics in order to write a piece about Cuban

sport had one tragic flaw: after the Lord Mayor's show there was nothing to report. Especially now the Lord Mayor himself - Juantorena headed Cuban sports development - was on vacation.

Colleagues had flown back home, clutching dollar receipts for their outrageous phooie bills. The event organisers had disappeared. The subpress centre in the old Hotel Hotel had been dismantled, revealing a bare room. The caravan had moved on and the caravanserai was empty.

Waiting for the lift, I tried once again to identify the pervading odour of the hotel. Cooking oil seemed to be there. Cooking oil and... aircraft fuel? Surely not.

Tenth floor, ninth floor, eighth floor... was that the one where Castro had been staying when his American girlfriend had returned from the States with a pistol, ready to kill him, and then relented? Must find out.

Lobby Prostitutes arranged down the left-hand side. Ice cream on sale in the middle. And there, among the pot plants, was a familiar face - one of the interpreters who had helped during the World Cup weekend.

Together, we took a taxi - a Lada, naturally - to the only obvious sporting site, namely Sport City. If anything was happening in Cuban sport, this was where it was happening. But not much appeared to be happening in Cuban sport at that precise moment. I spoke to a couple of teenage boys who had arrived by bicycle for a swim. They liked swimming, and they had come to Sport City because it had a pool. Where they could swim.

So where were the boxers? At a training camp, apparently. What about Javier Sotomayor, the world high-jump champion? Out of town. I found myself drifting towards a loudly contested bas-

ketball match being watched by a handful of student-types. A grizzled man in a tracksuit looked on - previously a sprint coach, he was now in charge of Cuban basketball.

As the US trade embargo cut more deeply into his country's economy, and professional classes took to the streets - to queue for bread - he was operating on minimal financial resources. The teams scrambling and shouting in front of us were dressed in a rag-bag of different outfits; even the ball looked a thing of shreds and patches.

A new basketball, the coach explained, cost \$35. Perhaps, he added, raising an eyebrow towards me, the *Independent* might like to sponsor the Cuban Basketball Association for the price of one? The *Independent* agreed, and once the game had concluded, and the ancient coach of the losing team had decided, ultimately, against suicide, we returned to the main office block.

Mooney may have been scarce at the Cuban sports institute, but there was no fast way of putting it in there. Even though we were at the end of a working day, forms needed to be filled and papers signed.

Midway through the negotiations, as the Giraffe and the Pelly and me - sorry, the coach and the interpreter and I - stood in a corridor, we were greeted by a woman emerging from another office. Juantorena's office.

Asked - through my interpreter friend - when Juantorena would be back from his vacation, the woman looked puzzled. Señor Juantorena was not on vacation. He would be back in his office tomorrow morning.

An interview was arranged. (Thank you God. Thank you basketball.) It yielded the necessary information.

I have my own private name for Juantorena now. I think of him as the Gift Horse.

Surbiton forced to take on Hull

HOCKEY
BY BILL COLWILL

SURBITON'S rearranged game with Hull will go ahead this afternoon in spite of a last-minute appeal to the English Hockey League by the Surrey side. Surbiton travelled to Hull last week to find the pitch waterlogged and, in accordance with the League regulations, they were told they had to play on the slip date, namely 13 March.

The EHL responded quickly to the appeal received yesterday morning, arranging telephone conference facilities to hear it later in the day. But with Surbiton unable to raise someone to be part of the link-up the appeal was dismissed.

Surbiton will travel to Yorkshire without their three South African who are away playing in the Test series against Australia but should have them back for tomorrow's normal League fixture away to Stourport. Surbiton are two points behind leaders Doochester but with a game in hand. Doucast-

er entertain Harlestown Magpies tomorrow.

Canterbury and Southgate will be depleted for tomorrow's top Premier game but, with both sides well on the route to qualification for the play-offs, not too much will be at stake.

There is, however, a great deal at stake for Chelmsford in the First Division, where a win against Barford Tigers would virtually guarantee a place in the restructured First Division next season. However, they could be without four of their Under-18s who will be playing in the RAF Careers Youth Cup quarter-finals.

Havant HC is playing host to the Japanese National squad over the Whit weekend with three matches against a Great Britain squad and a fourth against England.

Cricket: Humiliating defeat to Australia reflects a decline in the Caribbean game which is not yet conclusively terminal

Samples to take role in



Normally it is the words "decline" and "fall," that are applied to the disintegration of

"Kids now have a new set of sporting heroes," reckons Lawrence, who was himself born in England. "Footballers like Ian Wright, Dwight Yorke and Sol Campbell have largely replaced cricketers like Gary

Having grown up in Kenya, my first taste of West Indies cricket came in the Sixties and early Seventies, through squalls of static on the BBC World Service. Later, during the

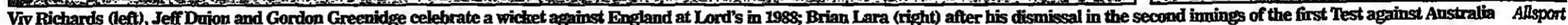
In the space of a few short months in that red-hot summer

Mind you, playing against the West Indies at the height of their powers was just as con-

players' demands, the political edge, prevalent under Richards, has been removed.

There is another factor, and that is the role played by county cricket. Much maligned recently, county cricket played a vital part in moulding the careers of West Indies players of the golden era. Nowadays, limited to just one overseas player per

Whatever anguish Australians are able to inflict over the next few weeks, the second Test starts today in Kingston, and only when they lose to England will that the malaise will be considered terminal.



Four Scots

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HYPERION

2.15 JOHN CHA

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He had intended to wait for the results of the most recent tests that his son's had undergone, but said he felt he had to

Hooper said earlier this week he had felt "torn in two" watching on television as West Indies collapsed to their worst Test match total at Port-of-Spain, and he clearly felt that he had to make a quick decision

The principal culprit, if one can call him that, was Herschell Gibbs who took 383 minutes of hard labour to get to his maiden Test century. The redeeming feature may be that having achieved that landmark, his previous highest score was 54, he will show what he is made of.

The others were journey men. Geoff Allott, left arm over the wicket, was at best steady. Dion Nash has neither the pace nor the swing he once showed. Daniel Vettori, the left-arm spinner, bowled a tidy length but lacks any sort of guile, while Chris Harris and Nathan Astle are medium-pace doblers.

They put on 127 for the middle wicket in 53 overs before Gibbs gave himself away when he straight drove Vettori for 4 and, soon after lunch, Kirsten swept at Vettori and was caught at midwicket. Thus fell the day's only wicket.

Jacques Kallis began with a flurry of strokes but soon disappeared back into his shell.

(Pollock-A-34)
SOUTH AFRICA - First Innings
 (overweight: 54-0)
 G Kirsten c Aslie b Vettori.....
 M H Gibbs not out.....
 I H Kallis not out.....
 Extras (5lb 4nb).....
 Total (for 1, 101 overs)
 Fall of wickets: 1-127
 To bats: O J Cullinan, W J Cronje,
 Rhodes, S M Pollock, M V Boucher,
 Klusener, P R Adams, A A Donald.
 Bowlers: S Doudi 19.5-7-26-0; N A
 25-7-70-0; D Nesh 17-5-38-0; J A
 5.1-12-0-1; L Vettori 21-5-62-14;
 Speed 11-4-0-0; C Z Harris 12-6-14-0;
 Unsub. K J.

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HYPERION

Major Complaints 5.05

1.45 **BETTING: 5-4 Major Ballyho, 13-8 Cinder Hills, 11-2 Happy Days, 10-1**
BETTING: No Stakes No Shows, 50-1 Cinder Hills

7-10 STRONG MISSION (8) B Alcantara 8 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-10
7-11 THORNTON HOUSE (28) J Goldie 8 1-3 4-5 6-7 8-9 10-11
7-12 TURKISH TOWN (19) R Nixon 8 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-10
7-13 GRAMIN DISTRAL (16) H Hammond 8 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-10
7-14 HARDING S 8 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-10
7-15 declared -
BETTING: evens Mike Star, 5-4 Grains D'Estival, 11-2 Thornton House.
7-1 Adamsdon, 10-1 Turkish Town, 33-1 others

FORM VERDICT

MIKE STAR can take this despite the unenviable task of giving so much weight away to the French import Grains D'Estival. The selection certainly stays this trip, his trainer is in form, has a good course record and ran his best race last time out.

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Bright Destiny 9st 5lb, BETTING: 5-4 Major Bell, 2-1 Bright Time Ahead, Bright Destiny

FORM VERDICT

BETTER TIMES AHEAD, who did nothing wrong in defeat by this week's winner The Next Velazq at Carlisle last time, is awarded a minor over Major Bell but the latter is still potentially well handicapped and thus is no great betting night. Bright Destiny has it all to do at the weights but is running well enough to be respected.

3.55 AYRSHIRE YEOMANRY CUP HANDI-

6 33MAY UNCLE BERT (F) (D) Miss L. Brown 9 D 0 0 0 1-1 Taylor
7 4PM CLAUDY BOY (SIX) (D) S Nick Pals 8 D 0 0 0 J McGehee
8 POSEY FELS DE CRESSON (P) (D) J Adams 9 D 0 0 0 S Posner
 — 6 declared —
Minimum weight 10st. Two handicap weights Uncle Bert last 13st, Claudy Boy last 12st. Five horses from 11st.
BETTING: 3-1 on Claudy Boy, 5-1 on Miss O'Saints, Montrose, 6-1 Mr Kriebel,
11-2 Bangabaggy, Fels On Cresson, 6-1 Claudy Boy, 14-1 Conston John

FORM VERDICT

The conditions of this race suit last year's winner MONTROSE and he has dropped to a decent mark. He has not been running badly on ground soft enough and can bounce back. Uncle

IN THE end Alexandra Meissnitzer did not have to move a muscle to become the first Austrian to win the women's super-giant slalom World Cup. The weather that had proved so fickle forced the organizers to cancel the

...KING
which ends today
has won four of the
championships so far and
German Austrian Anita
has any chance of

生 地 主

MAJOR BALLABY is the form pick and can see off Cinder Hills. Having improved to run second to a former Listed winner on the Flat in a 23-runner race last time, Major Ballaby races in a less competitive contest this time. A reproduction of that last time out form will make him hard to beat.

MR MAHDLO'S latest form has worked out particularly well and the fact that his conqueror, Jewwoody, was able to defy a 9lb rise with plenty to spare at Newcastle next time suggests that he may be able to defy a hike in the weights. He can take his revenge on old rival Valfgan, despite unfavourable terms.

FORM VERDICT

An improved performer this winter, HUNTING SLANE is likely to be better for a break and resumes on a fair mark. He is more consistent than Valedictory, who may reserve his best for Carlisle.

The ones to concentrate on here are the only two with form. JUST TOM has only had one outing and can be expected to improve considerably on that, seeing as his yard is only just emerging from a barren spell. Regal Island should give him most to do. Lord Sandrovitch is an interesting newcomer.

She had already claimed the overall crown before arriving in Spain and looks sure to finish supreme in the giant slalom but only a change in the Sup

outcome.
er G standings,
Digest, page 27

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

BASKETBALL

She had already claimed the overall crown before arriving in Spain and looks sure to finish supreme in the giant slalom.

Super G standings
Digest, page 2

1990-1991

1994

Flights of fancy smashed down

Peter Gade Christensen of Denmark (foreground) takes control against Indonesia's Johan Hadikusuma during his straight-sets 17-15 15-8 quarter-final victory at the All England Badminton Championships in Birmingham yesterday *David Ashdown*

TENNIS

an awkward opponent. Ranked No 5 in Britain and No 291 in the world, he has been selected ahead of Hampshire's Chris Wilkinson and Barry Cowan, of Lancashire.

"I'm particularly happy for Billy because he's making his debut in a semi-final," adds Higgins.

Bid cities 'mistake'

THE PRESIDENT of the International Olympic Committee, Juan Antonio Samaranch, yesterday admitted that he should have acted earlier to curb corruption in Olympic bidding.

Samaranch still claims that the Salt Lake City bribery scandal has been overblown and that the IOC shares only part of the blame. However, he added: "I don't deny it's serious, despicable in certain aspects, but it amounts to a total of around \$10 million."

"I'm guilty of one mistake: underestimating everything that was going on around all the bid cities. I should have realized earlier that the system for selecting host cities had to be changed."

MOTOR RACING

World motor sport's governing body decided yesterday to take no action against British American Racing in the controversy over the new Formula One team using two different liveries for its cars. Colin Brinkley, chief

team's manager, had been summoned to answer allegations bringing the sport into disrepute. However, Pollock told the hearing that his lawyers had acted without his instructions during the discussions. BAR have also agreed to redesign its cars.

SUPPIN-12: (Wristbane, Aus): Queensland Reds 19 Australian Capital Territory Brumbies 18. (Dunedin, NZ): Highlanders 46 Stormers 14.

SCOTLAND SQUAD (Hong Kong Sevens tournament, March): N Penny (Warrriors), C Mather (Edinburgh Reivers), A Rumburg (Edinburgh Reivers), Flockhart (Glasgow Caltonians), S Laid (Edinburgh Reivers), G Burns (Edinburgh Reivers), I Fairley (Edinburgh Reivers), Nitchel (Metros), M Di Rollo (Warrriors).

SKIING

WORLD CUP (Sierra Nevada, Sp) **Men's** women's super-G standings (Yesterday's final race cancelled): 1 A Malsbiller (Austria) 459; 2 M Dornheimmer (Austria) 373; 3 M Gier (Germany) 340; 4 R Cavagnoud (France) 335; 5 Goetschi (Austria) 308; 6 H Ger (Austria) 300; 7 C Rey Beillet (Switzerland) 232; 8 P Wiberg (Switzerland) 262; 9 S Bernthod (Switzerland) 232; 10 R Haeberli (Germany) 203; 11 C Mikterbauer (Austria) 191; 12 H Almoslin (Austria) 148; 13 S Brunner (Austria) 148.

160: 14 T Kötter (R) 152: 19 T Schnell

BY DERRICK WHYTE

American Chanda Rubin 2-6-4, 6-2 in Thursday's semi-final of the Evert Cup at the same venue, will face either Serena Williams or Sandrine Testud in today's final.

DAVIS CUP: Asia-Oceania Zone Group A: Malaysia bt Bangladesh 3-0; HK bt S

has played for Internazionale in the last two months. He has had chronic tendinitis in both knees.

1



THE SWEEPER

BY CLIVE WHITE AND MATT GATWARD

Six Mile Bottom in Beckham offer

SIX MILE Bottom, *The Sweeper* can report, is ready and willing to give its name to the next offspring of David Beckham and fiancée Victoria. Following the arrival of Brooklyn Beckham and suggestions in this column last week where Posh Spice might like to carry out her next pregnancy test in order to have a ready-made name for baby No 2, comes a generous offer from that very Suffolk village.

Actually, it comes from Gerry Crean, the proprietor of the Green Man Inn, whose hostelry near Newmarket racecourse has offered accommodation to the rich and famous for the past 500 years. He was both amused and delighted that Six Mile Bottom should be included in our list of, as he put it so tactfully, "possible Beckham baby conception centres".

He writes: "Indeed many a 'celebrity' child has been conceived at this inn, including quite a few royal bastards, since the 15th century. No, I don't mean referees! Among the many royal mistresses who were entertained here was Camilla Parker Bowles' great-grandmother, Alice Keppel, who used to visit the inn with the then Prince of Wales!"

"We still enjoy the custom of many famous celebrities, including well-known soccer players, particularly during the horse-racing season, but not David Beckham and his mistress, Victoria 'Posh Spice'. Not yet, at least. Perhaps after reading your column, they may fancy the idea of having a baby called Six Mile Bottom Beckham. I'll have the Royal Conception Room prepared, but being a Chelsea fan, I'm afraid it's decorated in blue. I hope they won't mind!"

We hope that after last Wednesday night, nor will you, Gerry.

WITH IBRAHIMA Bakayoko at last finding his morning work with a match-winning brace for Everton at Blackburn in midweek, it looks as if David Unsworth will have to put on hold his hopes of a new career as a striker. Ever since Walter Smith switched Don Hutchison from mid-field to attack, the central defender has been badgering the manager to give him a run-out up front, too.

and anyone who saw his stunning equaliser for the Merseysiders at St James' Park last Sunday can understand why.

In fact the switch may not be as risky as it sounds. Unsworth, who has a high ratio of success from the penalty spot, started out as a striker and played his school football in that position. "I really hated playing at the back," he said. "You were never involved in the game enough, and I think I was a bit of a glory hunter."

Down the years numerous players have successfully made the switch, Chris Sutton and Dion

spect that Newcastle fans still show their former manager, even two years after leaving the club, then he may end up lasting longer in the job than either of his two predecessors, Glenn Hoddle and Terry Venables, and certainly longer than the next four matches. Anyone dropping in at York City's recent home match at Bootham Crescent, for instance, could be forgiven for thinking they were at St James' Park, so much in evidence were the black and white stripes. And it was all because the Geordie fans, with a Saturday to kill before their match against Arsenal, wanted to lend their support to Keegan's visiting Fulham side.

Rund Gullit, on the other hand, will never be taken to the Geordies' bosom in the same way as long he remains oblivious to the club's history. He made a great fuss recently about bestowing the No10 shirt (as vacated by John Barnes) on his new Croatian signing, Silvio Maric, without realising that the only number which matters a jot on Tyneside is the No 9 made famous by, among others, the above mentioned "Supermac", Malcolm Macdonald.

DERBY COUNTY will no doubt be expecting another large crowd at Pride Park today for the visit of Liverpool. But whatever the reasons are for why they keep coming back – and the opportunity to qualify for Europe is not the least of them – the chance of witnessing a glut of goals isn't one of them. Not once in 28 League games this season, plus five at the end of last season, have more than two goals been scored, either by Derby or the visiting team. And if Michael Owen cannot put that right then no one can.

THAT STRIKER with the Italian-sounding name who was both loved and hated in the Steel City is back playing for Sheffield. No, not Paolo Di Canio but Ivano Varadi. Now in his 40th year, Varadi is turning out, appropriately, for Sheffield FC, allegedly the oldest football club in the world. The much-travelled Varadi, who, in fact, was born in Padiglione, incurred the wrath of both Wednesday and United fans in the late early 1980s by playing for both clubs, though not, of course, at the same time.

AS YOU WERE



A LIFE of FA Cup misery appears to have finally taken its toll on Jim Smith, the Derby County manager. Having been within spitting distance of the twin towers of Wembley, the Bald Eagle had his wings clipped once more, this time by a 90th-minute Arsenal strike in last weekend's quarter-final. A mere, down-covered chick (main picture) back in 1967 during his playing days at Halifax Town, the pain and angst of a career in management have transformed him into the snarling, follically deprived monument that can be seen today.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

THE SWEEPER has amnesia. He's forgotten how to lose. Two winners – Arsenal can beat Derby and Manchester United to draw with Chelsea – and a non-runner (Barnsley v Tottenham) in last week's Triside. And, though he's not sure whether it's the light – or just from being in the form of his life – this weekend's Premiership programme looks easy; Chelsea can

hammer West Ham; Coventry can bury Blackburn; Arsenal can gun down Everton; Leicester can fox Charlton; Newcastle may draw with Manchester United; Sheffield Wednesday may draw with Leeds; Tottenham may draw with Aston Villa; and Wimbledon can cut down Nottingham Forest. Freefalling Middlesbrough may be held to a draw by Southampton tomorrow while Fiorentina may draw with plucky Venezia.

THE SWEEPER'S DAY-EARLY RESULTS SERVICE

LIBERO WAGERS (56, 25p trebles with Stanley); Chelsea to beat West Ham (4-9); Coventry to beat Blackburn (evens); Arsenal to win at Everton (5-6); Leicester to beat Charlton (4-5); Newcastle to draw with Manchester United (12-5); Sheffield Wednesday to draw with Leeds (9-4); Tottenham to draw with Aston Villa (12-5); Wimbledon to beat Nottingham Forest (8-13).

SUNDAY SKY GAME Middlesbrough v Southampton Draw (£2, 9-4, generally). **SUNDAY 4 ITALIAN JOB** Venezia v Fiorentina Draw (£2, 2-1, William Hill). **ORIGINAL BANK: £100.** **CURRENT KITTY: £196.68!** **TODAY'S BETS: £19.62 (inc. tax).**

MASCOT ON THE MAT

Name: Gunnersaurus
Club: Arsenal

Appearance: Dinosaur.

Crime sheet: In keeping with Arsène Wenger's generous offer to re-stage an FA Cup tie with Sheffield United last month, Arsenal sources claim that Gunnersaurus is a superb ambassador for his extinct species and a professional mascot with an unblemished record. Sightings of this meteor-fearing beast pinned to the hallowed Highbury turf, having his face slapped by Ian Wright, the former Gunner, have been dismissed as light-hearted banter, and if unsubstantiated suggestions that Gunnersaurus once threatened to eat Leicester City's Filbert Fox for breakfast within ear-shot of the Junior Gunner enclosure are true, it can only have been as the result of extreme provocation. In mitigation, Your Honour: If, on rare occasions, Gunnersaurus has tested players' tempers, it can be explained by sheer over-exuberance. A roaring Arsenal fan, his desire to get involved in warm-ups understandably gets the better of him. Having watched the present Arsenal back four strutting their stuff though two ice ages, Gunnersaurus can surely be forgiven for believing he falls into the right age bracket to be given a run-out.



MY TEAM



LORRAINE KELLY
DUNDEE UTD

Breakfast Television presenter

"I have been a Dundee United fan since 1987 (or 88), when my now husband took me on a first date to see them play Hearts. United lost 3-0, and I've supported them ever since. They had a brilliant team then. Classy and elegant, with players like Paul Sturrock, Maurice Malpas and Jim McInally. When I was with TVAM I used to report on matches. I went to Borussia Mönchengladbach where I saw them in the UEFA Cup. I was so excited I could hardly do the interview afterwards. I've also been to the Nou Camp to see them play Barcelona. However I missed the 1994 Scottish Cup final under instructions from my doctor: The final was in May and my baby was born in June. If I had gone I would have had the baby there and then."

IN T'NET

Found on the Web: The Last Word

THERE ARE internet sites aplenty out there in cyberspace catering for fans and followers of all persuasions. However, that kid who could not cut it as a player and so became a referee, has been somewhat neglected – until now. Continually ostracised by players, managers and fans alike, referees are fighting back. Their first step in this George versus the Dragon saga has been to create their own little site – all you Paul Alcock wannabes can seek solace at The Last Word. The site gives a comprehensive list of the laws of the game, exciting news updates in the world of decision-making, and best of all a forum so that all the men in black can get together and have a good moan about how difficult the job is. <http://sunsite.unc.edu/byers/ref/index.html>

SEEN BUT NOT BOUGHT

FOR THE legion Manchester United fans who live on the south coast and have never been further north than Cheam, they can now buy their own Theatre Of Dreams so they at least have an idea what the stadium looks like. A hand-painted, highly detailed Old Trafford model is a snip at just £70, or there is the slightly cheaper version at £20, but you have to paint this one yourself.

THEY'RE NOT ALL DENNIS BERGKAMP

Unsung foreign legionnaires No 30 **MARIO DORNER:** The 29-year-old Austrian striker has delighted fans worldwide with his sublime goalscoring touch. His colourful career has taken him from Wustel in his home country, to Motherwell, where he made just two appearances, before his 1997 move to Darlington. With the invaluable experience of five Austria Under-21 caps Dorner, a huge success at the Third Division club, was the fans' player of the year last season as he fired 10 goals during the Quakers' promotion push. This season, possibly overawed by big-name players like Marco Gabbiadini, he has struggled to find his form, and has been busy keeping the bench warm. But with those talents it is surely only a matter of time before he is again entertaining the Feethams faithful.



And the lorryload of toxic waste award goes to...

A BRITON is fighting the world heavyweight title tonight, though you'd hardly know it. Poor Lennox Lewis – he could be the first undisputed heavyweight champion from these shores this century and most of the population will be aware of it only through news bulletins and the papers.

For terrestrials like myself, the big fight may as well not be happening.

There has been little cause for the principal channels to flag the event this week – why should they? – so the floor was left clear, unfortunately, to a former amateur boxer turned alleged comedian, Lee Evans' *Kings of the Ring* (Channel 4 Thursday) was a strange title (excepting so far as every



CHRIS MAUME
SPORT ON TV

boxer is a king of the ring, just for getting up there in the first place) for a tribute to the heroically failed British attempt on the world heavyweight title.

It was supposed to be funny. In the cause of this column, I've grimly viewed so many heroically failed attempts to inte-

grate sport and humour that I've run out of similes. As funny as a death in the family? As funny as a head-on collision with an out of control juggernaut overflowing with toxic waste? As funny as Nick Hancock using a rude word? All of these and more.

Maybe it was just me. There were some bits less unfunny than others. "The earliest known title fight", "was at 4.30 in the morning when Bruno met Tyson," while Queensberry Rule No 13 is "the American always wins." There was no surviving film of the Bob Fitzsimmons fight in 1899 so there was a test card and the words "viewing on Sky only" (actually, that was quite funny). This was about the best of the

so-called humour. There was a running gag in which Evans playing trainer Mickey Rough, preparing a fat bloke for a world title fight. He had a couple of decent lines: "When I fought Jerry Garcia in 1927...", "It's not the winning that's important, it's having your head taken apart", "Nobody knew how to use the ropes like me. Rope Boy, they called me."

The rough stuff was otherwise exactly that, the scenes with the fat bloke particularly execrable: in a Rocky take-off, for instance, we saw him in a local market hitting a string of sausages. Shoot me somebody. Evans also appeared as a doctor, a spoof German for no good reason, reminiscence of Herr Flick in *'Allo, 'Allo* as

well as a bunch of other roles, none of them remotely amusing. The script apart, the programme's fundamental problem was Evans, who comes across like Jerry Lewis on crack. He suffers all the worst excesses of Carrey Syndrome. Any potential for humour lost amid the ack-ack barrage of facial tics and physical jerks. Give him his trunks, you feel like saying. He has a simple formula: if something isn't funny, exaggerate it. If that's still not funny, exaggerate it some more.

End of story. Still, the programme wasn't entirely devoid of merit, with some interesting historical bits. There was quite a nice theme about boxers and showbiz – Big Lovable Frank wasn't the

first thespian pugilist. After Fitzsimmons lost to Gentleman Jim Corbett he trod the boards, while Gunner Moir, who lost to Tommy Burns in 1907, went on to star in a drama about the Marine Celeste.

The programmes principal pleasure, indeed its raison d'être was the archive footage (which could have been more gainfully employed in a proper documentary of course). We could do without the titles inserted into the early silent stuff – "ding" etc – but later on, there was atmospheric film of Rocky Marciano punching, butting and forearm smashing his way to victory over Don Cockell, with Evans dubbing a funny voice over film of the hapless Brit signing the contract

"just sign here – it's what we call a suicide note".

There was excellent stuff about the "game" Brian London, who was overwhelmed by Floyd Patterson, and, inevitably, much about the various challenges to Muhammad Ali.

The highlight of *Kings of the Ring*, was Ali v Richard Dunn in Munich. Ali confronted him in the hall in the run-up to the fight, his finger jabbing in Dunn's face. "You will never take my crown. No Briton will ever take my crown," he went on, ranting until he could rant no more while the Yorkshireman regarded him with a steady gaze, amused rather than bemused. When Ali was fi-

nally spent, Dunn looked around him. "This is a nice place," he murmured.

The star of the entire programme was the unknown American commentator in Munich. "I've never seen a man recover from so many right-handers outside of a movie," he said, as Ali's fists pounded Dunn's face. My favourite line came as Dunn advances like a Tommy on the Somme, "like a man charging madly into a threshing machine."

If only the script for *Kings of the Ring* had been as good as half as decent as that. Some may have said that as a boxer, Evans was a comedian, perhaps he should have stuck to punches rather than punch lines.

Chris Maume 1550

Premier clubs to escape Fifa ban

FOOTBALL'S WORLD governing body, Fifa, have threatened to ban clubs if they do not release players for the World Under-20 Championships in Nigeria next month, but the Football Association has insisted that Premier clubs will not be weakened.

The FA's technical director, Howard Wilkinson, has already stated that he will not be picking last-team regulars, and the FA's spokesman, Steve Double, confirmed that the tournament would be used to develop young players.

"Tournaments like these are all about developing the international of the future," Double said. "We will be sending a strong team which will do their country proud and we have liaised with Fifa throughout."

"We have spoken to Fifa and have been assured that there is no question of action being taken against the FA."

The FA added that the Liverpool striker Michael Owen, who is eligible for the tournament, was never going to be considered for selection.

"Somebody has raised the question," Michael Owen but tournaments like these are all about developing the international of the future and for somebody like Michael that would be a backward step," said Double.

Originally, the Fifa president, Sepp Blatter, had been angered by England not sending a full-strength squad to Nigeria

BY KIERAN DALY

and he threatened suspension against England and the FA. "They have to send the best teams otherwise it will not work," Blatter said. "If they don't send the best teams, they will be suspended by Fifa."

Fifa's general secretary, Michel van Praag, also warned if the clubs do not release their players they risk being banned. "If a national association reports to us that a club has withheld a player from competing we will take action," he said.

The Leeds manager, David O'Leary, announced recently that he would not allow his first-team players to take part in the tournament, and Wilkinson assured him such players were unlikely to be selected. The Everton striker, Francis Jeffers, Aston Villa centre-back Gareth Barry, Manchester United full-back Wes Brown and West Ham midfielder Joe Cole are other Premier players set to be excluded.

Wilkinson said: "I never had any intentions of taking players who are involved on a regular basis with their first teams."

Blatter is taking legal action to stop a new book, *How They Stole the Game* by David Yallop, that alleges corruption in his election battle with the Uefa president, Lennart Johansson, to take over from the retiring Fifa president, Joao Havelange.



Rand Gullit goes back to the drawing board with his Newcastle United team in training at Chester-le-Street yesterday. Owen Humphries/PA

Grimsby want happy return

ALAN BUCKLEY wants his Grimsby side to make up for lost time and try to get themselves back in contention for a play-off place against the First Division leaders, Sunderland, at Blundell Park today.

Grimsby's last three fixtures have all fallen victim to the weather and Buckley said: "We've got three games and, in some cases, four games in hand over clubs and if we were to win just two of those, we would be in a play-off spot. But we know winning games and

talking about winning games are two different things."

Peter Reid, the Sunderland manager, hands a debut to the goalkeeper Andy Marriott in place of Thomas Sorensen, who suffered a concussion against Bradford on Tuesday.

The West Midlands rivals Birmingham and West Bromwich Albion, both of whom are in the play-off places, meet at St Andrews with Lee Hughes - the country's leading scorer with 31 goals - out through suspension.

"We've sneaked into the top six and this will be a big game for us as Birmingham are a very good side," Malcolm Cross, the West Brom assistant manager, said. "We want to stay in the play-off places for at least the next couple of weeks and if we can do that, then anything can happen. We still think that we can be there at the end of the season."

Away at relegation rivals Port Vale, Gary Megson, the Stockport manager, is looking for his side to repeat the fight-

ing spirit they showed in Tuesday's 3-1 defeat of Swindon when they played with 10 men for more than an hour after Sean Connolly was sent off. "For us to get a result was tremendous. I was delighted with the effort and commitment," Megson said. "It's all about getting results and we will just have to try and get some more results now so that it doesn't become any more of a problem later on."

Steve Bruce, the Sheffield United manager, believes his

team have done well to be challenging for promotion. The Blades are three points away from a play-off spot despite having to sell players to keep the club financially secure and Bruce, whose side visit Tranmere tomorrow, said: "We're one of several clubs who are all playing for sixth place."

"I know that supporters' expectations were higher at the start of the season but with the transfer situation here and the injuries we've had, I'm pleased to be where we are."

Todd's faith stays strong

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE

COLIN TODD is refusing to panic after seeing his Bolton side slide down the First Division. Wanderers have gone five games without a win, conceding 12 goals in their last four matches as they have slipped to fifth - six points short of Bradford in second place.

But Todd is keeping faith in his side for today's home game with Queen's Park Rangers. "When we had gone 15 games unbeaten, no one was running us down," Todd said. "The only problem at the moment is the state of mind of the players; they don't lose their ability. They're exactly the same players who helped us go unbeaten for 15 games. There's nothing wrong in the camp, but the media are trying to direct the situation to appear worse than it is."

The Wolves assistant manager, John Ward, will put his worries for Bristol City's well-being to one side for 90 minutes when the Robins visit Molineux. Ward walked out as Ashton Gate manager earlier this year after the club appointed Benny Lennartsson, now the manager, as director of football without his approval.

Ward said: "I can sympathise with the players and fans because we all went through a lot of hard work to get the club into Division One last season. But professionally I'm working for Wolves and will be putting all my efforts into getting a win for us."

Bristol City have signed the 27-year-old Manchester City winger Neil Heaney on loan until the end of the season and he is set to make his debut at Molineux.

Hendry blow to European hopes

THE RANGERS defender Colin Hendry is almost certainly out of Scotland's Euro 2000 double-header against Bosnia and the Czech Republic later this month. The 32-year-old former Blackburn captain last played in the Scottish Cup victory against Stenhousemuir, since when he has been missing with an ankle problem.

Hendry is not fit enough to make Dick Advocaat's squad for today's Premier League game

SCOTTISH FOOTBALL

with Motherwell at Ibrox and, while the Dutchman refused to say he will definitely not make the Scotland side, he admitted he was very doubtful.

"I was told he could be back for Saturday but I was informed yesterday that it will be a bit longer yet," said Advocaat.

"Hopefully he can start training again next week but I have my doubts about that. The final

decision will be made by Craig Brown and his team but in my opinion Colin is very doubtful."

Hendry's absence would be a huge blow to Scotland's chances of gaining maximum points from the two Euro 2000 games - a must in a delicately balanced qualifying campaign.

Leicester's Matt Elliott and the Aberdeen centre-back Derek Whyte are the men in the frame to replace Hendry. Bert Paton has made a sur-

prise return to Dunfermline as chief scout just two months after losing his job as manager of the Premier League club. He will report directly to the Pairs manager, Dick Campbell, who was previously Paton's right-hand man at East End Park.

Paton will take responsibility for player recruitment at all levels and will work alongside the youth development manager when that post is filled.

Batistuta returns for Fiorentina

GABRIEL BATISTUTA is back and, with 10 games left Fiorentina will try to keep up the pressure on Lazio, the league leaders, when they visit pinstriped Venezia in Channel 4's live Serie A game tomorrow.

Batistuta, the Florence club's brilliant Argentinean centre-forward who has scored 18 league goals this term, has been out of action from a leg injury. However, in midweek, he came on in the 66th minute in

ITALIAN FOOTBALL

BY IAN DAVIES

Fiorentina's Italian Cup semi-final second leg tie with Bologna to help La Viola reach the final.

Pasquale Padalino, the defender, also returns but Rui Costa, Fiorentina's Portuguese playmaker, is suspended and Edinovic, the Brazilian striker who has been given a four and half year prison sentence

in Brazil last week for causing three deaths in a car crash, is out with bruised ribs.

Venezia, who have lost just two of their last eight games and won their last five games at their island stadium, will be without Emanuele Briochi, the defender (suspended).

Lazio, who lead Fiorentina by four points, visit bottom-placed Empoli while tonight Internazionale play Milan at the San Siro ahead of their do-or-

die European Cup quarter-final second leg with Manchester United there on Wednesday.

Ronaldo, Inter's Brazilian striker, is expected to make his first league appearance since mid-January. Il Fenomeno played for the last 35 minutes on Tuesday as Inter lost the second leg of their Italian Cup semi-final to Parma.

After a narrow victory in the first leg, Inter were 1-0 down at the end of the first half. Ronaldo scored in the 66th minute to level the score at 1-1. In the 88th minute, Ronaldo scored again to give Inter a 2-1 victory.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

Today we saw the All Blacks playing in red jerseys.

France coach Jean-Claude Skrela applauds Wales' brilliant 34-33 win in Paris.

"The tortoise beat the hare. Ferrari driver Eddie Irvine enjoys his success - and the McLaren's failure - at the Australian Grand Prix.

Some days he could climb Everest and other days he can't climb out of bed. Aston Villa boss John Gregory on striker Stan Collymore, who is being treated for depression.

The Italians are used to going to places and playing a different formation. They are not like the Englishmen who might go to clinics when they are left out.

Derby boss Jim Smith sings Francesco Baiano's praises.

We call it the Viagra punch because it stiffens every part of the body - bar the private parts.

Jack Trickett, manager of boxer Michael Brodie.

I've had the whole of the Caribbean behind me since I was a teenager and there is no reason to let up.

Brian Lara after West Indies had recorded their lowest-ever Test score of 51, against Australia.

I am sorry if you misinterpreted my actions during the game, which were not meant to cause any offence.

Letter from Liverpool striker Robbie Fowler to England colleague Graeme Le Saux after their bust-up at Chelsea.

TODAY

FOOTBALL

FA CUP

1st Round

2nd Round

3rd Round

4th Round

5th Round

6th Round

7th Round

8th Round

9th Round

10th Round

11th Round

12th Round

13th Round

14th Round

15th Round

16th Round

17th Round

18th Round

19th Round

20th Round

21st Round

22nd Round

23rd Round

24th Round

25th Round

26th Round

27th Round

28th Round

29th Round

30th Round

31st Round

32nd Round

33rd Round

34th Round

35th Round

36th Round

37th Round

38th Round

39th Round

40th Round

41st Round

42nd Round

WEEKEND POOLS CHECK AND FIXTURES GUIDE

FOOTBALL

FA CUP

1st Round

2nd Round

3rd Round

4th Round

5th Round

6th Round

7th Round

8th Round

9th Round

10th Round

11th Round

12th Round

13th Round

14th Round

15th Round

16th Round

17th Round

18th Round

19th Round

20th Round

21st Round

22nd Round

23rd Round

24th Round

25th Round

26th Round

27th Round

28th Round

29th Round

30th Round

31st Round

32nd Round

33rd Round

34th Round

35th Round

36th Round

37th Round

38th Round

39th Round

40th Round

41st Round

42nd Round

FOOTBALL

FA CUP

1st Round

2nd Round

3rd Round

4th Round

5th Round

6th Round

7th Round

8th Round

9th Round

10th Round

11th Round

12th Round

13th Round

14th Round

15th Round

16th Round

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36th Round

37th Round

38th Round

39th Round

40th Round

41st Round

42nd Round

FOOTBALL

FA CUP

1st Round

2nd Round

3rd Round

4th Round

5th Round

6th Round

7th Round

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35th Round

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38th Round

39th Round

40th Round

41st Round

Pringle's perspective suits Charlton

Glenn Moore meets a forward with an unusual upbringing who is a key player in his club's fight against relegation

THE PLACE was London, at the tail-end of the Sixties. He was Jamaican and had travelled to the centre of the old empire to pursue his studies; she was a Swedish au pair and, says her son, had come to city of Carnaby Street and the Rolling Stones "to have fun". They met, married and went to live in Sweden.

This classic love story, embodying an era in which young people began to choose their own destiny, has now spawned a sequel.

Thirty years on another romantic tale is brewing in the capital, one of triumph against the odds, of a battling underdog and an unlikely saviour.

The putative hero is the son of that cross-cultural Sixties union, Martin Pringle, a dark-skinned Swede with an English name signed from Portugal.

When Martin Ulf Pringle - his full name reveals his Scandinavian heritage - arrived at Charlton Athletic they had lost eight matches in succession and were sliding back into the First Division. They lost again, at Southampton, where he came on as substitute, but he then marked his first start with the last-minute goal that secured a draw against Newcastle.

Since then Charlton have taken 10 points from six matches and hauled themselves out of the relegation area if not out of danger. Pringle, who has scored two further goals, this month had his loan signing converted to a permanent move at the bargain price, for a 28-year-old Swedish international striker, of £800,000.

Today he leads the Charlton attack at Leicester City hoping to put the club's unexpected revival back on track after last week's loss at Coventry.

Having been leading 1-0 against 10 men, the defeat struck hard but Pringle hopes it could prove beneficial. "Sometimes a defeat helps to get the concentration back," he said when we met at Charlton's neat training ground in south-east London. "We can use the loss as a wake-up call. We should not have lost but have to accept it and dig in."

This is customary fighting talk from a footballer in his position but, in Pringle, Charlton have got a player with a broader sense of perspective than most.

This is not so much the consequence of growing up as a



Martin Pringle (left) is tackled by Rigobert Song of Liverpool in Charlton's important victory at The Valley last month, a result that raised their hopes of remaining in the Premiership

Scandinavian-West Indian in such a homogenous society as Sweden - he says he had no problems - as the self-reliance developed from the death of his father while he was a teenager, and his wide experiences outside football.

He opted to do his military service in one of the most demanding branches of the Swedish Army then did a wide variety of jobs while making his name in the game as a part-time footballer with Stenungsund and Helsingborg. "I was a mailman, a bartender, a waiter, a teaching assistant and, for four years, worked in the construction industry."

"It makes you appreciate being a full-time footballer. You get a different view of life, more

down to earth. It means you do not feel above anyone else even if you are a top footballer. Some players may feel they make a lot of money and want to gloat but I know I've been lucky to be a professional footballer, especially coming from Sweden where there are not many professional players."

This view is reflected on the pitch where Pringle, like most Scandinavian imports, displays a healthy work-rate. "He doesn't give up," notes his team-mate John Robinson. "He has presence and he frightens defenders."

Not that this was always appreciated. "In Portugal they always said 'stay in the box, you are supposed to be in there scoring goals', but that is not

what I do. I work hard for my team-mates. It wasn't really appreciated there until Graeme Souness came in."

It was Souness who eventually sold Pringle, but the player remains a fan.

'I was a mailman, a bartender, a waiter, a teaching assistant and worked in construction... It makes you appreciate being a footballer'

"He is a demanding coach. He is used to very high standards and wants so much from his players. He knows what it takes to get up there having been there as a player and he wanted us to push ourselves

into it they got along as well. I think he is doing well." Pringle, however, increasingly found himself either on the bench or on the wing and was ready to move when approached by Curbsishley. He

had previously been alerted to Pringle's potential by the former Charlton player Scott Minto, now at West Ham but then at Benfica with Pringle.

"He came into the club unaffected by the run we were having. He was obviously a lot fresher and gave us a lift," said Curbsishley.

The Charlton manager, who only made the signing permanent after Souness, anxious for cash to finance this week's signing of Steve Harkness, cut the asking price, added: "Having gained a permanent move I hope he is still hungry. I was quite happy with him having to fight for everything but I've had a word with him and don't think he is going to rest on what he has gained."

Pringle seems eager enough. The deal means he can start looking for permanent accommodation. He and his wife Nina are currently in a nearby hotel which, with the arrival of six-week-old son Hugo, is getting cramped. It could also lead to his gaining a higher profile in Sweden and, perhaps, an international recall especially as, unlike compatriots Fredrik Ljungberg, Andreas Andersson and Jesper Blomqvist, he is playing regularly.

Pringle, whose accent is a curious hybrid of Jamaican, south London - he still has relatives in Tooting - and Scandinavian, might have been lost to the game entirely. As a youngster he not only played ice hockey, but was better at it than

football. "I played for eight years but swapped because it was easier to get attention as a footballer. In ice hockey there is very little time to show your skills because you are in and out all the time. In football you are always on the pitch."

Football, I venture, is perhaps also less dangerous. "No, ice hockey is safer because we wear all that padding."

Ice hockey's loss is Charlton's gain and, though Curbsishley emphasises that Pringle still needs to work on his finishing - he missed two good chances against Coventry, there is relief that they now have a forward who looks like scoring. With 10 matches to go that could make the difference.

The unpredictability that keeps City alive

DEVOID OF enthusiasm and confidence, I allowed a Villan friend to drag me to Villa Park on 27 February for my annual humiliation as a Sky Blues supporter, surrounded by a noisy sea of triumphant home fans and deafened by the hurtful sounds emanating from the Hottel End and its sophisticated desire to "defecate on the City tonight".

The Sky Blue supporters have had a gargantuan share of enervating final games of the season over the years. This year will be no different. It's something to look forward to. We cannot compete with the Manchester Uniteds, Arsenals and Chelseas for the title, so we inflict our own excitement on ourselves. Adrenaline just will not flow in mid-table mediocrity. Unpredictability has become Coventry City's trademark, a win at Aston Villa would doubtless be followed by the direst of home defeats against Charlton.

FAN'S EYE VIEW COVENTRY CITY BY ANDREW HAMILTON

After the highlights of the defeat by Manchester United, when Paul Williams, a wholehearted journeyman, was superhuman in his efforts to shackle Beckham *et al*, Alan Hansen dived through an analysis of Ryan Giggs' modest contribution to the match. There was barely a mention of Coventry, least of all Williams.

A mere 20 minutes into the match City have scored, surely just a blip in the course of historical inevitability. A blatant penalty dismissed with an expansive wave, nothing unusual about that these days. Mark Lawrenson, well known to us as a Cityphobe, will be equally dismissive. Another

Sky Blue goal after half-time - yet Gods, how will we cope if it really happens? - the first League win at Villa Park for 105 years!

Oh no... a penalty. A dive surely Mr Lawrenson? Dion Dublin, once an icon, now "just a greedy bastard" shoots to the right as he always did for us and cue the usual posturing from the dug-out and interaction between the referee and our flame-haired manager. Their body language emphasises their lack of respect. Goals from an Australian and a Dutchman finish off the hapless Villa team. It's almost safe to jump up and down.

I lose my friend in the mêlée but I gloat gleefully to myself as I pass the Hottel End. When I arrive home, my wife and mother, not known for their sympathetic views on football, have heard the incredible world-shattering news. They leave me to savour the moment again on *Match of the Day*.

The historic goal-laden 4-1 victory doesn't even make the three main matches. Who cares? We're happy to play second fiddle to Manchester United on such an auspicious day, as good as if not better than the day years ago when we were promoted to the top flight, and that day in May 1987 when Wembley was a Sky Blue heaven. Nobody loves us but Coventry City will line up in the Premiership once again in five months' time - you can bet on that!



Dublin: Villa's villain

Kidd's bruised-and-white army

BRIAN KIDD was not joking when he invited journalists this week to examine why Blackburn Rovers have spent £26m this season only to find themselves in the bottom three of the Premiership with 10 matches to go. "Look at my treatment room," he said, "and you'll see real quality."

Unfortunately, it is on the pitch that quality counts and Kidd takes his bruised-and-white army to Coventry today for a relegation six-pointer having lost their last four games. Naturally, Blackburn will be at less than full strength with only one full-back, Callum Davidson, and one centre-half, Stéphane Henchoz, available thanks to injury and suspension.

"I've been in this situation since day one," Kidd said, "but we can't keep going on about the injury situation we have to get on with what we've got. I've told the players that we can't afford to feel sorry for ourselves or say 'why me?'. That's life and we'll battle on."

Blackburn lost to Everton on Wednesday and there is a danger they will be four points adrift of safety by tonight if they lose at Highbury Road and Charlton continue their recent improved form at Leicester. "I don't want to be in a position where we have to rely on other people's results to stay up," Charlton's manager Alan Curbsishley, said yesterday. Worringly for Rovers they are rapidly approaching that position.

BY GUY HODGSON

are prepared to imagine for Old Trafford. The arithmetic is simple: if they win their next 16 games they will be European and English champions, and FA Cup winners. United, however, could come crashing to the hard stuff today at Newcastle where they confront a team who might also stand in their way at Wembley on 23 May and who have been beaten only once in their last 11 games.

They will also come face to face with a man who has twice turned down a chance to move to Old Trafford, Alan Shearer, who scored his 50th Newcastle

goal against Nottingham Forest on Wednesday, and needs only one more to get his 150th in the League. He now has 15 this season which would be considered a formidable strike-rate if it were not for Dwight Yorke whose guttury for goals - 26 in 34 starts for United - would have encouraged fears of an eating disorder if he applied it meals. And to think there were voices (including this one) who suggested Alex Ferguson had lost touch with the value of money when he paid Aston Villa £12.5m for his services.

For United to win anything domestically they have to halt Arsenal's ambition for a double

Double. They travel to Everton today having taken their unbeaten run to 16 matches against Sheffield Wednesday on Tuesday but will meet a team whose mood changed radically at Ewood Park in midweek.

Instead of a team crushed by recent reverses there will be semblance of confidence about Everton and particularly Ibrahim Bakayoko whose two goals against Blackburn restored hope that he might not be a case of throwing Goodison money after bad. Even he accepted he had to be dropped, saying: "I hadn't been playing well and had to be replaced. It was up to me to work hard and

hope I would be rewarded. I have never felt under pressure, but it is important that as a striker I score goals."

Chelsea, third but with a game in hand, entertain West Ham fresh from dominating possession against Manchester United in their midweek FA Cup quarter-final but stale for having lost 2-0. "I don't think we have to blame ourselves for the way we played," Gianfranco Zola said, "if we keep playing like we did against them I think we can get some success."

On the subject of punishment, you have to take your hat off to Steve Stone for managing to find a team with a worse current run than Nottingham Forest. The former England player did it, however, with a £5.5m transfer to Aston Villa who have thrown away their ambitions by collecting just one point from a potential 18. He attempts to halt an alarming descent at Tottenham.

Leeds travel to Hillsborough to meet a team who ought to provoke warm feelings in David O'Leary as Sheffield Wednesday provided him with his first win as a manager in November. That game was a watershed in more ways than one because Jonathon Woodgate got his only goals for the club to date, heralding the start of the Elland Road youth revolution.

Which is not a description you can ascribe to Middlesbrough who have made even Blackburn's descent seem leisurely in comparison to their freefall from second place early in the season. Lose tomorrow to second-bottom Southampton and Teesside might as well as be re-spelt Tease-side.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP															
	Home							Away			5-game form				
	Pt	Pl	G	W	L	D	F	A	G	W	L	D			
Not used in night Upcoming matches															
1 Man Utd	28	27	10	4	1	5	15	6	5	2	28	14	WWDWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Man Utd (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Man Utd (H) v 30 Arsenal (A)	
2 Arsenal	28	25	9	5	0	24	4	5	6	3	14	9	WWDWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Arsenal (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Arsenal (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
3 Chelsea	27	25	9	5	0	21	8	5	6	2	20	14	WWWW	Tuesday 10:30: 27 Chelsea (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 27 Chelsea (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
4 Leeds	28	24	9	3	2	23	6	4	6	4	20	20	WWWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Leeds (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Leeds (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
5 Aston Villa	28	24	8	2	4	25	21	4	6	4	14	12	LLDLL	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Aston Villa (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Aston Villa (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
6 Derby	28	21	6	5	3	13	13	4	6	4	13	13	LDWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Derby (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Derby (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
7 Wimbledon	28	20	7	5	2	18	12	3	5	6	14	26	LWLW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Wimbledon (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Wimbledon (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
8 West Ham	28	20	8	3	3	20	19	3	4	7	11	20	LWWLW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 West Ham (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 West Ham (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
9 Liverpool	27	19	7	4	2	33	16	4	2	8	17	18	-LWLWL	Tuesday 10:30: 27 Liverpool (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 27 Liverpool (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
10 Newcastle	28	18	0	7	3	4	21	17	3	5	6	16	20	WWWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Newcastle (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Newcastle (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)
11 Tottenham	28	16	6	6	2	25	17	2	6	6	18	17	DDWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Tottenham (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Tottenham (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
12 Sheff Wed	28	15	6	3	5	17	10	4	2	8	16	20	WWWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Sheff Wed (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Sheff Wed (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
13 Middlesbrough	27	13	4	8	1	16	10	3	4	7	18	29	-LLDLL	Tuesday 10:30: 27 Middlesbrough (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 27 Middlesbrough (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
14 Leicester	27	13	5	3	5	18	20	3	6	5	9	16	LDWW	Tuesday 10:30: 27 Leicester (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 27 Leicester (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
15 Everton	28	11	3	8	3	9	7	4	2	8	13	23	LWLWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Everton (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Everton (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
16 Coventry	28	10	6	4	4	19	15	2	2	10	11	24	WWWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Coventry (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Coventry (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
17 Charlton	28	7	4	5	5	18	13	2	4	8	14	26	WWWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Charlton (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Charlton (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
18 Blackburn	28	6	5	3	6	16	10	1	5	8	12	22	LDWW	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Blackburn (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Blackburn (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)	
19 Southampton	28	6	2	6	2	6	21	22	-1	9	10	-6	-31	-LWLWL	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Southampton (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Southampton (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)
20 Nott Forest	28	1	3	1	6	7	12	26	2	2	10	11	30	LLDLL	Tuesday 10:30: 28 Nott Forest (H) v 30 Everton (A) 3:45 Wednesday 12: 28 Nott Forest (H) v 30 Tottenham (A)

Handwritten note: "Jp 11/10/150"

Weekend guide to the Premiership

MATCH OF THE DAY

Newcastle United v Manchester United

Last season: 0-1

BY BRUCE POPE

IF THERE is such a thing as a good time to play Manchester United, then today might be it. With two gruelling FA Cup ties in four days against Chelsea - the Reds winning Wednesday night's replay at Stamford Bridge 2-0 - and the looming European Cup quarter-final second leg at the San Siro on Wednesday night against Internazionale, Alex Ferguson's players might be excused for being distracted. By everyone except Ferguson himself that is.

The man that Rudi Gullit, his opposite number at St James' Park today, has called the best manager in English football, has hinted that Manchester United will be at full strength against Newcastle. And if Ferguson is taking the fast-improving Magpies

that seriously, then you can be sure his players will. Ferguson has virtually a full-strength squad to choose from, with only Nicky Butt and Ronny Johnsen under treatment, though both are expected to be fit for Wednesday.

Gullit may admire Ferguson, and the feeling is definitely mutual. The Dutchman won praise from his counterpart for his tactical acumen when the Magpies earned a deserved 0-0 draw at Old Trafford in November, and Gullit is expecting another testing afternoon: "I think they will come with their strongest team because they want to win the championship, so they need to win, and that's what my team is prepared for."

Those preparations have been undermined by the absence of defender Steve Howey with a calf injury, leaving the rest to try and prevent Dwight Yorke (right) and former St James' deity Andy Cole - assuming Ferguson doesn't shuffle his pack of aces from adding to their 29 goals in the Premiership this season. At least midfielder Gary Speed is winning his battle against flu, while striker Temuri Ketsela and Peruvian Nolberto Solano, rested for Wednesday night's 2-1 win at Nottingham Forest, will be refreshed and hoping for recalls.

Submerged in all the salivating over the Yorke 'n' Cole show is the goalscoring prowess that Alan Shearer (left) offers to Newcastle. There have been voices sug-

gesting that the England captain has passed his sell-by date but Yorke, with three of his last four goals resulting from crosses, is proof that top quality strikers can only thrive if given top quality service. Newcastle cannot quite hope to match the skills of papa David Beckham or Ryan Giggs, but having players such as the in-form Dietmar Hamann in support will ensure that Shearer's name is one the scorers will still need to inscribe.

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): Owen, Harper, Barton, Charvet, Delaney, Hughes, Dorr, Speed, Liss, Hamann, Solano, Maric, Brady, Georgiadis, Ketsela, Shearer, Seha, Griffin.
MANCHESTER UNITED (from): Schmeichel, O'Neill, Berg, Stam, Irwin, Beckham, Keane, Scholes, Giggs, Cole, Yorke, Solskjær, P. Neville, Shearman, Blomqvist, Brown, Curtis, Van der Grint.
Suspensions: None.
Referee: D. Ellery.

Chelsea v West Ham United

Last season: 2-1

DEFENDER FRANCK Leboeuf is Chelsea's main injury doubt before the game against West Ham at Stamford Bridge. The Frenchman was taken off at half-time in the club's midweek FA Cup quarter-final replay defeat at the hands of Manchester United with a thigh muscle injury but Michael Duberry, Bernard Lambourde and Andy Myers are on standby. Player-manager Gianluca Vialli completes a three-match suspension today, while Albert Ferrer and Dan Petrescu, on international duty with Romania in midweek, are available again.

Paolo Di Canio is ruled out for West Ham with a groin problem aggravated in the 1-0 loss at Southampton last week, while Joe Cole is unavailable after turning out for England Under-18 duty against Israel last night. Manager Harry Redknapp will be hoping there is no repeat of the dire performance at The Dell, or of the dressing-room shenanigans that resulted afterwards, when midfielder John Moncur, a non-playing substitute, took offence at Redknapp's kicking-off by kicking a plate of sandwiches across the room and storming off.

CHelsea (from): De Gea, Hitchcock, Kharine, Ferrer, Le Saux, Desailly, Leboeuf, Duberry, Terry, Myers, Lambourde, Babbay, Petrescu, Wise, Morris, G. Mataro, Goldbach, Newton, Nicholas, Zola, Flo, Forssell.

WEST HAM UNITED (from): Hiskop, Ferdinand, Pearce, Dicko, Ruddock, Minto, Kellie, Lush, Potts, Foe, Berkovic, Lampard, Lomas, Sinclair, Kitson, Moncur, Hodges, You, Forster.

Suspensions: Chelsea: Vialli. Referee: S. Lodge.

Coventry City v Blackburn Rovers

Last season: 2-0

JOHN ALOISI is expected to be left out of Coventry's line-up against Blackburn to make way for George Boateng to return from suspension, even though the Australian international, a mid-season signing from Portsmouth, has been in good form. Boateng scored twice against Aston Villa two weeks ago but was suspended for last weekend's 2-1 win against Charlton when Vol Whelan returned to score.

Chris Sutton may find himself back in defence for Blackburn in the crucial relegation battle at Highfield Road. With Darren Peacock and Marlon Brown suspended, and Christian Zaccarelli still out, Sutton may be the only option in Rovers' injury-riddled defence. Sutton may be the only option in Rovers' injury-riddled defence. Sutton may be the only option in Rovers' injury-riddled defence.

COVENTRY CITY (from): Hedman, Nilsson, Shaw, Williams, Burrows, Boateng, Zaccarelli, Froggatt, Whelan, Hiskop, Aloisi, Soldevila, Clement, Konig, Glouchinski, Fitzsimons.

BLACKBURN ROVERS (from): Flann, McAtee, Henchoz, Taylor, Konde, Coughlan, Davidson, Gillespie, Johnson, Marcolin, Dunn, Wilcox, Duff, Sutton, Davies, Blake, Ward, Jansen, Williams.

Suspensions: Coventry: Cuthwell. Blackburn: Peacock, Broome. Referee: M. Riley.

Derby County v Liverpool

Last season: 1-0

DERBY HAVE new signing Vas Borbakis available for the home match at Pride Park with Liverpool but manager Jim Smith could name an unchanged side. Borbakis, signed from St. Albans United, has been struggling with a thigh strain but is named in the squad. However, he is likely to start on the bench as the Rams step up the chase for a European place. Derby moved into the top six and a possible UEFA Cup place with their victory over Aston Villa on Wednesday night.

Liverpool play their first game for a fortnight, and their only Premiership match in March today, but captain Paul Ince is doubtful with a sore toe, with youngster Stephen Gerrard a possible replacement in midfield. Michael Owen, Veggard Heggen and Steve Staunton should all have recovered from injuries sustained in the defeat at Chelsea. Internationals, plus major fixture changes, mean that Liverpool's next match is the Mersey derby against Everton on Easter Saturday. Jamie Carragher will not have completed his three-match ban until the Easter Monday game at Nottingham Forest.

DERBY COUNTY (from): Houli, Prior, Somak, Laurson, Eron, Bohnen, Powell, Stevens, Baines, Burton, Warchop, Borbakis, From, Caron, Harper, Elliot, Chese, LIVERPOOL (from): James, Heggem, Staunton, Song, Byrne, Gerrard, Redknapp, Berger, Owen, Fowler, Reddie, Bobb, Matteo, Kwame, Ferri, Friedel, Ince, Thompson.

Suspensions: Liverpool: Carragher. E. Jones. Referee: S. Lodge.

Everton v Arsenal

Last season: 2-2

NICK BARMBY is doubtful for Everton's Goodison Park match with title-chasing Arsenal. The former England player injured a shin in the 2-1 away victory at Blackburn on Wednesday. Manager Walter Smith will recall French midfielder Olivier Dacourt following a two-match ban and will keep Ivory Coast striker Ibrahim Bakayoko up front after his two goals at Ewood Park.

There is good news for Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger, however, with Emmanuel Petit and Nigel Winterburn returning to the starting line-up. French midfielder Petit has had no action to the ankle injury which kept him out for six matches before he appeared as a second-half substitute to inspire Arsenal's 3-0 midweek win against Sheffield Wednesday on Tuesday night. Left-back Winterburn was rested for that match because of a throat infection but will now take over again from elson Vivas. Petit's return allows Ray Parlour to switch back his familiar wide-right role and replace Fredrik Ljungberg, phen Hughes (broken arm), Steve Bould and Remi Garde, in with twisted ankles, are the only other casualties.

EVERTON (from): Myrie, Turner, Short, Watson, Materazzi, Unsworth, Ball, West, Dacourt, Grant, Barmby, Hutchinson, Bakayoko, Jeffers, Branch, Cadamara, O'Leary, Jenkins, Simonsen.

ARSENAL (from): Seaman, Doan, Keown, Adams, Winterburn, Parlour, Vieira, O'Quinn, Bergkamp, Anelka, Ianni, Dawson, Grenadi, Upson, Vivas, Manninger, pensations: None. Referee: U. Rennie.

...And statistics

Leeds aim to strengthen grip on Yorkshire

LEEDS UNITED supporters hardly need reminding that most of English football's major trophies have ended up on the other side of the Pennines over the last 20 years or so. Today, however, David O'Leary's team have the chance to underline their supremacy in Yorkshire when they make the short trip to Hillsborough to play Sheffield Wednesday.

Fourth in the Premiership and with a European place firmly in their sights, Leeds are 13 points clear of their county rivals. However, recent history suggests the game could be both a close and high-scoring encounter.

Honours are even between the two clubs in terms of Premiership results - there have been five draws and four wins apiece in their 13 meetings - and the matches can usually be relied upon to produce plenty of goals. The 13 games have produced a total of 45 goals, an average of three and a half per game.

Leeds and Wednesday are the only Yorkshire clubs which have always been in the Premiership. Sheffield United had two years in the division, while Barnsley lasted only one year. However, there are signs of a Yorkshire revival, with the possibility of the Premiership contingent being doubled next season. Bradford City are making a strong challenge for one of the automatic promotion places from the First Division, while both Huddersfield and Sheffield United are in contention for a play-off place.

In the FA Cup, five of this season's last 16 were from the white rose county, although Barnsley are now the only team left and

Leeds v Sheffield Wednesday in the Premiership

1992-93	Leeds	3	Wednesday	1
	Wednesday	1	Leeds	1
1993-94	Wednesday	3	Leeds	3
	Leeds	2	Wednesday	2
1994-95	Wednesday	1	Leeds	1
	Leeds	0	Wednesday	1
1995-96	Leeds	2	Wednesday	0
	Wednesday	6	Leeds	2
1996-97	Leeds	0	Wednesday	2
	Wednesday	2	Leeds	2
1997-98	Wednesday	1	Leeds	3
	Leeds	1	Wednesday	2
1998-99	Leeds	2	Wednesday	1

Fickle fans: the difference between highest and lowest gates this season

Sheffield Wednesday	20,154
Wimbledon	14,363
Leeds	10,190
Everton	9,828
Aston Villa	9,682
Nottingham Forest	8,663
Tottenham	7,787
Blackburn	7,099
Coventry	7,082
Derby	6,979
Liverpool	4,602
Leicester	4,366
Charlton	3,555
West Ham	2,891
Southampton	899
Middlesbrough	566
Chelsea	538
Newcastle	431
Arsenal	264
Manchester United	264

Statistics: Brian Sears

have to conquer Tottenham to win a place in the semi-finals. Since the war, in fact, the Cup has gone to Yorkshire only once, when Leeds beat Arsenal in 1972. Yorkshire teams have been runners-up on five occasions since the war.

Where Yorkshire clubs come out on top is in a table comparing the fluctuating size of crowds. At the end of November 39,475 packed Hillsborough for a famous 3-1 victory over Manchester United, but only 19,321 came for the next Premiership game against Nottingham Forest. Compare this with six other Premiership clubs whose attendances have never varied by more than 1,000 this season.

Leeds players celebrate the goal by Willem Korsten which earned a victory over Everton last month



Yorkshire born and bred: A current team of Yorkshire-born Premiership players

David Whelan (Leeds) (born Sheffield)	John Scales (Tottenham) (born Huddersfield)	Robert Ulinshorne (Leeds) (born Wakefield)
Neil Whelan (Coventry) (born Leeds)	David Batty (Leeds) (born Leeds)	Simon Grayson (Aston Villa) (born Ripon)
Neil Rudd (Leeds) (born Bradford)	Danny Cadamara (Tottenham) (born Bradford)	Andy Booth (Sheffield Wednesday) (born Huddersfield)
Nathan Davies (Blackburn) (born Sheffield)		

TOMORROW (4PM)

Middlesbrough v Southampton

Last season: N/A

MIDDLESBROUGH MANAGER Bryan Robson is facing a selection headache as he prepares for the visit of relegation-threatened Southampton to the Riverside Stadium tomorrow. Captain Andy Townsend, fellow midfielders Paul Gascoigne and Mark Summerbell, and defender Gary Pallister are all suspended. But striker Brian Deane, defender Gianluca Festa, midfielder Phil Stamp and long-term absentee Alun Armstrong are back in contention to help ease Robson's worries.

Southampton manager Dave Jones has injury worries rather than his counterpart's predicament, but he is still without four key

players for their match at the Riverside Stadium. Strikers James Beattie and Egil Oestad are under treatment for groin injuries, while defenders Ken Monkou and Jason Dodd are also struggling. Saints captain Dodd has a swollen knee and Monkou is recovering from a hamstring injury which ruled him out of last weekend's win over West Ham.

Jones is desperate for his team to improve their form away from The Dell. Saints have won just once on their travels this season with a chronic shortage of goals the reason for their problems. The trip to face out-of-form Middlesbrough offers the

chance to build upon the vital three points garnered from the Hammers.

"We seem to win one, then lose one, then win one. We don't seem to be able to find the consistency we need," Jones said. "It is a very big game for us because we know we've got a chance of getting something."

MIDDLESBROUGH (from): Schwarzer, Beresford, Stockdale, Cooper, Vickers, Festa, Gordon, Harrison, Kinder, Sains, Murray, Meddison, Campbell, Ricard, Deane, Beck, Armstrong.

SOUTHAMPTON (from): Jones, Dodd, Beattie, Monkou, Collier, Hilly, Lundekvam, Le Tissier, Oakes, M. Hughes, Oestad, Beattie, Bridge, Marston, Kitchell, D. Hughes, Ripley, Most.

Suspensions: Middlesbrough: Townsend, Gascoigne, Summerbell, Pallister. Referee: M. Reed.

Leicester City v Charlton Athletic

Last season: N/A

LEICESTER TAKE on Charlton at Filbert Street boosted by the news that their striker Emile Heskey is back to full fitness. Heskey had been suffering with a back problem but will resume his attacking partnership with Tony Cottee, who is still in search of his 200th League goal. Defender Frank Sinclair is also available after recovering from a thigh injury but Theo Zagorakis serves a one-match ban.

Charlton goalkeeper Simoo Royce is set to start against Leicester despite receiving a knock during training on Thursday. Manager Alan Curbishley has Sasa Ilie in reserve should he need cover for Royce. Richard Rufus makes a much-needed return to bolster the centre of defence following a two-month lay-off with a broken wrist, but Eddie Youds is still not ready to come back from tendinitis of the knee. Defenders Carl Tiler and Chris Powell are expected to come in despite late fitness tests but winger John Robinson serves a one-match ban for his eight bookings.

LEICESTER CITY (from): Keller, Apheddu, Sinclair, Taggar, West, Elliott, Ullahchew, Izet, Lennon, Heskey, Parry, Garry, Cunningham, Savage, Karmach, Campbell, Marshall, Impey, Wilson, Cottee, Oakes.
CHARLTON ATHLETIC (from): Royce, Ilie, Barnes, Barnes, Beale, Bright, Brown, Fortune, Holmes, Hunt, Jones, K. Jones, Kinsella, Konchinski, Mendonca, Mills, Mortimer, Newton, Parker, Powell, Pringle, Redfern, Rufus, Tiler.
Suspensions: Leicester: Zagorakis, Charlton: Robinson. Referee: A. White.

Sheffield Wed v Leeds United

Last season: 1-3

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY striker Benito Carbone will sit out the Yorkshire derby with Leeds at Hillsborough through suspension. The Italian has picked up eight cautions this season which means a one-match ban and increases the likelihood that Ritchie Humphreys will return to partner Andy Booth up front. With no injuries to key players, Humphreys' starting role is almost certain to be the only change to the side despite two straight defeats.

Leeds midfielder David Hopkin is available after serving a one-match suspension. The Scotland international could face a battle to get back in the side, however, following the performances of David Batty and Alf Inge Haaland in the 2-0 victory over Tottenham in midweek which gained a measure of revenge for the FA Cup defeat. With Stephen McPhail and Bruno Ribeiro also fit after recent injury lay-offs, manager David O'Leary has strong competition for places in the midfield. Winger Willem Korsten should also be passed fit.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): Smickal, Asherson, Jank, Newson, Welke, Booth, Saneet, Coburn, Humphreys, Briscoe, Stefanovic, Hinchcliffe, Emerson, Agogo, Rudi, Alexander, Sonnet, Morrison, Carter.
LEEDS UNITED (from): Murray, Haaland, Raddie, Wetherall, Korsten, Whelan, Hasebe, Ribeiro, Bowyer, Hopkin, Grant, Hulse, Newell, Harz, Batty, Woodgate, McPhail, Smith, Jones, Robinson.
Suspensions: Wednesday: Carbone. Referee: G. Poll.

Tottenham Hotspur v Aston Villa

Last season: 3-2

TOTTENHAM MANAGER George Graham will be without Justin Edinburgh and Steffen Freund for the match with Aston Villa at White Hart Lane as they must both serve one-match suspensions. Andy Sinton or Mauricio Taricco will replace Edinburgh at left-back, while Allan Nielsen should play in central midfield in place of the German Freund. Graham again has the luxury of picking from three strikers - Les Ferdinand, Chris Armstrong and Steffen Iversen - to play up front.

Aston Villa will hand an immediate debut to new £5.5m signing Steve Stone. The winger will step into the right of midfield as Villa seek to end a run of one point from a possible 18. They are without England international striker Dion Dublin, who is serving a one-match ban, but manager John Gregory is also hampered by injuries for the trip to London. Striker Julian Joachim has been struggling with a hamstring strain, while right-back Steve Watson (ankle), midfielder Ian Taylor (thigh) and utility player Simon Grayson (knee) are all under treatment. Grayson will be out of action until the end of the month.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from): Walker, Carr, Vega, Young, Campbell, Taricco, Fox, Anderson, Nielsen, Cadden, Sinton, Sherwood, Givoli, Ferdinand, Iversen, Armstrong, Dominguez, Baardens (s).
ASTON VILLA (from): Bonnici, Schmechel, Southgate, Barry, Wright, Hendrie, Stone, Thompson, Merson, Draper, Collymore, Joachim, Oakes, Hughes, Samuel, Lescott, Standing.

Suspensions: Tottenham: Edinburgh, Freund. Villa: Dublin. Referee: P. Jones.

Wimbledon v Nottm Forest

Last season: N/A

WIMBLEDON'S RECORD £7.5m striker John Hartson is due to return to the starting line-up start against Nottingham Forest at Selhurst Park. The infamous training ground incident involving former West Ham team-mate Eyal Berkovic cost Hartson a three-match ban and he then sat on the bench for an hour against Leicester last week before replacing Efan Ekoku.

Nottingham Forest have doubts surrounding Richard Gough and Stale Stensaa. Gough looks almost certain to miss out after suffering a back injury while making his debut in Wednesday's 2-1 defeat by Newcastle. Christian Edwards is on standby to deputise for him. Stensaa, meanwhile, is nursing a badly cut face and severe swelling after taking an accidental blow during that game. However, manager Roo Atkinson hopes he will be available as Forest continue what now appears to be a forlorn fight against relegation. Thierry Bonalair is the leading candidate to take over the right-wing berth vacated by Steve Stone following his £5.5m move to Aston Villa.

WIMBLEDON (from): Sullivan, Hoal, Cunningham, Kimble, Perry, Blackwell, Thatch, Appo, Pearce, C. Hughes, Earle, Euell, M. Hughes, Roberts, Ardley, Hartson, Fear, Kennedy, Gough, Gayle, Goodman, Leaburn, Carr.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): Conroy, Lodi, Jones, Stensaa, Edwards, Gough, Christie, Mattson, Bonalair, Johnson, Rogers, Palmer, Quashie, Van Hoolendonk, Freeman, Harwood, Woon, Bar-Williams, Darcheville, Shipperley, Gemmill and Beasant.
Suspensions: None. Referee: K. Burge.

SPORT

WEST INDIES IN TRAUMA P26 • CLARKE'S RICHMOND EXPERIMENT P23

Boxing: Americans question commitment of Briton's challenge for undisputed world heavyweight title

Holyfield driven by desire

BY RICHARD WILLIAMS
in New York

IT IS, Frank Maloney says, the biggest day for British sport since the 1966 World Cup final. In the sense that British boxers have spent the whole of the century failing to capture the undisputed world heavyweight championship, his claim should not be dismissed. A victory for Lennox Lewis over Evander Holyfield in New York tonight would quieten the ghosts of the 11 men from Gunner Moir to Frank Bruno who tried without success to match the unique exploit of Bob Fitzsimmons, the Cornish-born fighter who held the title from 1897 to 1899.

Like Fitzsimmons, whose parents took him to New Zealand at an early age, Lewis grew up outside Britain. Like Fitzsimmons, who took the title from James J Corbett after five years of being denied his

TALE OF THE TAPE		
Evander Holyfield		Lennox Lewis
36	Age	33
215	Weight	246
6'2"	Height	6'5"
77"	Reach	84"
43"	Chest (normal)	44"
45"	Chest (expanded)	46"
16"	Biceps	17"
12"	Forearms	15"
32"	Waist	34"
22"	Thigh	26"
13"	Calf	18"
19"	Neck	18.5"
7-1/2"	Wrist	8"
12"	Fist	12"

chance, Lewis has been made to wait. Unlike Fitzsimmons, who weighed barely 12st and had spindly legs and a receding hairline, Lewis will enter the ring at Madison Square Garden, in front of a sell-out crowd of 19,000, looking every inch a heavyweight champion.

At Thursday's weigh-in he tipped the scales at 246lb, or 17st 8lb, giving him a 2st 3lb advantage over Holyfield, as well as three inches in height and three years in age. Around the Garden's precincts, however, not many observers are giving him a chance of adding Holyfield's World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation titles to his own World Boxing Council belt. Holyfield, who has boldly predicted that he will knock Lewis out in the third round, is being heavily backed to recapture a title he lost, along with the other two, to Riddick Bowe in 1992.

Septics have been swift to point out that a massive weight



Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis hype their heavyweight title fight, but they will leave the smart attire behind when they climb through the ropes tonight Reuters

advantage can be a competitive liability. In 1919, Jack Dempsey gave 57lb and a beating to Jess Willard. Later Max Baer gave 54lb to Primo Carnera, with a similar outcome. And Holyfield, who conceded 38lb when winning the undisputed title with a third-round knock-out of James "Buster" Douglas in 1990, and 49lb to George Foreman when winning on points the following year, certainly knows what it takes.

Angelo Dundee, the former trainer of Muhammad Ali and Sugar Ray Leonard, typifies the harsh bite of local opinion. "I just think Holyfield wants it

more than the other guy," he said at Thursday's weigh-in. "There's a reluctance about Lewis. If I had a guy with his proportions, I'd just say 'Get him!' and turn him on the guy. But he don't give you that. He waits and he looks. But if he waits and looks, he's gonna get the hell kicked out of him. Bell rings, you should jump."

"Fighters mature at different stages, but Lennox has never seemed to me to mature to the point where he wants it. I think if he wanted it he'd be an awesome son of a bitch. I don't know why he doesn't want it. He

could be king of the world. But he doesn't give me that impression. I think Holyfield wants it more. He's a hell of a man."

Those looking for signs of Lewis's alleged reluctance found them this week in the fighter's own words when asked if he had a game plan for tonight's 12-round. "No," he said. "I'm just going to let the fight unfold. I'm flexible in that. This is the first time I'm fighting Evander and the first time he's fighting me, and we've both got different styles, so we're going to have to see how they adapt to each other,

how they complement each other in the ring."

Words like "flexible", "complement" and "adapt" do not impress old-timers who see a softness, both physical and mental, about Lewis. He speaks quietly, is ill at ease with the hucksterish rhetoric of a heavyweight promotion, and sometimes fails to impose himself on the sort of contests he should dominate. But, at 33, he has been there or thereabouts for a long while, and only Oliver McCall has got the better of him, in a defeat averaged three years later. Drawing a line through the

two men's form is a brief and underlightening task. Lewis beat Bowe for the super-heavyweight gold medal at the Seoul Olympics in 1988, whereas Holyfield lost a best-of-three series to a Bowe whose true quality was soon to be questioned. Both Lewis and Holyfield took points decisions over Ray Mercer. Holyfield's credibility rests on his two defeats of Mike Tyson, an achievement Lewis can match only by winning tonight.

Can he do it, where Jem Roche, Don Cockell, Brian London, Henry Cooper, Joe Bugner, Richard Dunn and the

rest failed? "This fight is a mystery to everyone, including me," his trainer, Emanuel Steward, said this week. But whatever dreams the heart may hold, the head says it is Holyfield, by decision.

Lewis faces defining moment, page 22

Macca is left out in the cold

FOOTBALL

BY ALAN NIXON

STEVE MCNAMAMAN is not being considered by his manager Gerard Houllier and could have played his last game for Liverpool. The forward, who is bound for Real Madrid at the end of the season, will not be in the squad for today's match with Derby County.

McManaman had initially been left out of the team, but his latest drastic step suggests Houllier is planning for the future without him.

It is an unfortunate consequence of the Bosman transfer ruling that players can sign in advance of joining their new clubs and before their contract expires with their current employers and McManaman has quickly discovered then problems that can cause.

The supporters had criticised him, but Houllier's latest action is more devastating. Left out of the team, McManaman may find his possibility of an England recall under Kevin Keegan more remote.

Marseille want Nicolas Anelka and are prepared to pay £10m for Arsenal's teenage French striker, but the club's president, Robert Louis-Dreyfus, admitted he could not match the wages Anelka could earn elsewhere, even if the player was interested in joining the Mediterranean club.

Joe Kinnear has left the Sheffield hospital where he had been since his heart attack last week. The Wimbledon manager spent seven nights in the cardiac ward of the Northern General after being taken ill shortly before the Dons' game with Sheffield Wednesday.

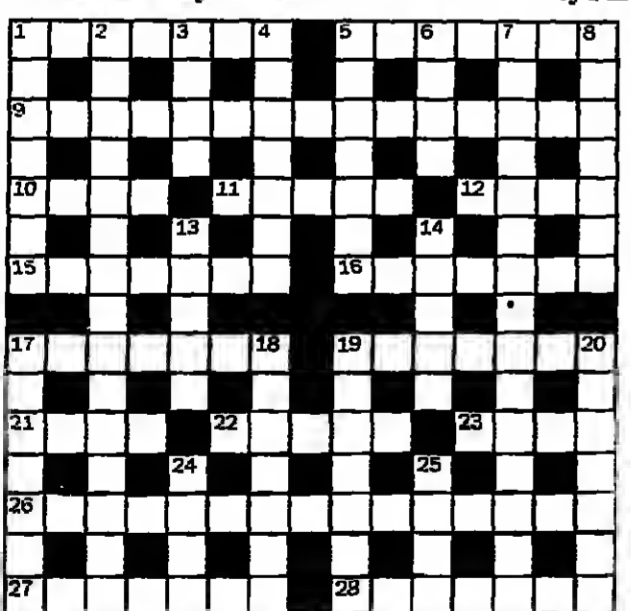
The 52-year-old Dubliner was kept under observation but has been given the all-clear to return to his London home. Wimbledon take on Nottingham Forest in the Premiership at Selhurst Park today.

■ Fifa, world football's governing body, has refused to accept Mexico's bid to host the 2006 World Cup finals because the documentation arrived well after the deadline date.

THE SATURDAY CROSSWORD

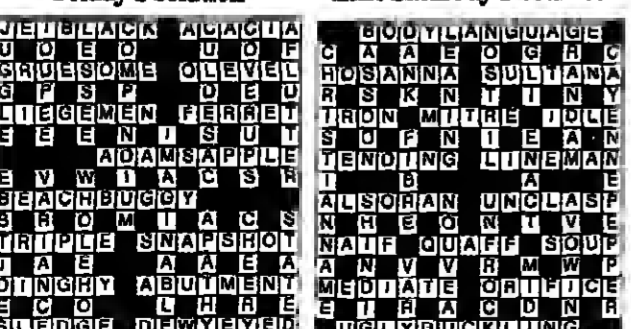
No.3869 Saturday 13 March

by Phi



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution



ACROSS

- 1 Mineral containing silver and a bit of lead - marvellous (7)
- 5 Get possession of fashionable girl with sex appeal (7)
- 9 Kissing face, having little time to spare (7,3,5)
- 10 One from Northern region circuit, we hear (4)
- 11 & 14 down Cricketer's famous comment (5,5)
- 12 Surprise on turning 19? (4)
- 15 Angry about article's expression of defiance (2,5)
- 16 Currently male's in hospital - he's full of cold! (7)
- 17 Chap had died in vehicle in Somerset village (7)
- 19 Bowled not caught in schoolboy game? That's crazy (7)
- 21 Character's heartless expression of lust (4)
- 22 See 13 down
- 23 Country animal identified, though only partly (4)
- 26 Germ. art mounted - stirring grand opera (15)
- 27 Pick duty as heroine of Greek drama (7)
- 28 Like some car-dealers? Hurry back to get one for Volkswagen (5-2)

DOWN

- 1 Appear upset when left inside due to illness (7)
- 2 Takes on a difficult spot of wedding? (6,3,6)
- 3 Solid cake, without topping (4)
- 4 The Parisian's draping upper room in mesh (7)
- 5 A note Henry has hoover - takes draughts? (7)
- 6 Mercenary work to access computer systems (4)
- 7 Wandering roamer out taking in mellow, pleasant ambience (4,11)
- 8 Shuffled, having eaten (5,2)
- 13 & 22 across Set a person to probe the writer's source of expenses? (5,5)
- 14 See 11 across
- 17 Company without associates importing good scent from Germany (7)
- 18 Welsh area had no little road dug up (7)
- 19 Worker on train redesigned support for the stout (4-3)
- 20 A little insect is kept in tin (3)
- 24 Courteous chap giving information on time (4)
- 25 Against getting age from a worded (4)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4012, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BT. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: E. Barrick, Lincoln; N. Datta, W4; R. Thornton, Eastbourne; E. Loo, Northfield; T. Gadd, Terrington.

IN MONDAY'S 12-PAGE SPORTS SECTION

Richard Williams reports from New York on Holyfield versus Lewis



Graham Kelly (left) on football's grounds for optimism
Plus Glenn Moore on football, Chris Hewett on rugby and Brian Viner

NEXT WEEK: THE GLORY OF CHELTENHAM

Richard Edmondson and Greg Wood, two of racing's most knowledgeable and entertaining writers, mark your card for the National Hunt festival

Andrew Longmore and Ken Jones on the drama and colour of a great sporting event



Jamie Osborne (left) gives a jockey's view from the weighing room, while 'Dodger' McCartney, a professional punter, pinpoints the horses to watch

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WEEKEND REVIEW

COMMENT • ARTS & BOOKS • COUNTRY & GARDEN • TRAVEL

ELIZABETH DOLE:
IS THIS AMERICA'S
NEXT PRESIDENT?

PROFILE, PAGE 5

FROM GLOUCESTER
WITH LOVE: THE
PERFECT PORKER

COUNTRY, PAGE 17

ON THE ROAD TO
MARRAKESH, BY
FRANCINE STOCK

TRAVEL, PAGE 19



Matthew Kelly with, L to R, Ricky Maxwell as Tony Rich, Becky Goodwin, Joanne Palfrey as Joan Osborne, Chris Nott as David Essex, Steve Murray as Dennis De Young

Stars in their minds

They don't fix their Barry Manilows up with false noses. They won't let men do Shirley Bassey. And don't even dream that they'll let you be a Black-and-White Minstrel. Welcome to *Stars in Their Eyes*, the weirdest show on television

David Essex is worried about his West Midlands accent, but Alison Moyet puts a comforting arm around his shoulders and tells him he'll be fine. We are in make-up, an hour before showtime. Tony Rich is confident. Dennis De Young, an engaging Southerner, is so nervous that he "could do with a Valium sandwich". A few years ago, Neil Diamond had a terrible panic attack. And Kate Bush went down with laryngitis.

Meanwhile, LeAnn Rimes is silent. She is only 21 and therefore has to have a chaperone, Jimmy Osmond, and Michael Jackson. "Michael Jackson had lovely manners," she says. "I send all my kids Christmas cards, you know." But Patsy hasn't returned to LeAnn Rimes, who is a Mormon from Chorley and has distanced herself from the backstage camaraderie. The night before, LeAnn went home to be with her family, while David Essex and the others socialised in their Manchester hotel. They were warned not to get too merry, though,

and were told the cautionary tale of Robbie Williams – or it might have been Gary Barlow, or even Barry Manilow, nobody can quite remember – who got back to his room at 5am, legless. "He was just about OK by the time we did the show," recalls the executive producer of *Stars in Their Eyes*, Jane Macnaught. "But he didn't win. He missed his chance away."

I am a late convert to *Stars in Their Eyes*, having long sneered at the show as jumped-up karaoke. It doesn't particularly help to learn that the format was born in Holland as *Heini Haussmann's Sound Mix Show*. And being unfamiliar with half the acts doesn't help either. My knowledge of popular music is shaky, and in any case covers only the years from Abba to Wham!. Besides, my children aren't yet old enough for me to form even a vicarious interest in *Top of the Pops*. So unless a contestant strides on to meet host Matthew Kelly, and says "Tonight, Matthew, I'm going to be Tinky-Winky," the chances are that I won't know whether the performance is any good. Who are Dennis De Young and LeAnn Rimes, anyway?

And yet, *Stars in Their Eyes* has gradually sucked me in. It was a show of a couple of series back that kindled my interest, when a pair of rather square

accountants, a man and a woman who had apparently met at a party yet still barely knew each other, emerged from the dry ice as Peters and Lee. How the hell did they find out that they could sing together like Peters and Lee? What motivated them? Would they start, on the back of their TV appearance, a Peters and Lee tribute act... or just return quietly to their spreadsheets?

Tonight, Matthew, *Stars in Their Eyes* embarks upon its 10th series. It has become a cultural phe-

BY BRIAN VINER

nomenon. Every year, upwards of 40,000 people contact Granada Television, asking for application forms. Last year's celebrity show, which featured Carol Vorderman as a slightly dodgy Cher, was ITV's highest-rated light entertainment programme for five years.

Meanwhile, not even Granada's most senior executives are beyond indulging their pop star wannabe fantasies on stage. Somewhere, probably at the back of a safe, there is a videotape featuring Charles Allen, the company's dour chief executive,

strutting his stuff as Elton John. And at the other end of the spectrum, if you'll pardon the pun, is Loretta O'Sullivan, a 17-year-old milkmaid from County Cork. She had never heard of *Stars in Their Eyes*, nor had she ever been out of Ireland, but was entered by her sister, and features in the forthcoming series as a startlingly good Patsy Cline.

The process of finding contestants begins every July, shortly after the grand final of the previous series. Applicants send in cassettes of themselves singing, and the awful ones are weeded out, as are the suspiciously good ones – more often than not they turn out to be the real person performing. Last year, dozens of Celine Dion's applied, following the success of *Titanic*. "Obviously it reflects fashion," says Jane Macnaught. "When *Ghost* came out, with the Righteous Brothers on the soundtrack, we had lots of Righteous Brothers."

Having whittled the 20,000 or so applicants down to 900, Macnaught and her colleagues go on the road to conduct auditions. Sometimes, singers are persuaded to change their act. Freddie Mercury became Jarvis Cocker. And, even more bizarrely, Andrew Strong, of The Commitments fame, became Sacha Distel. "In Glasgow last year,"

adds musical director Ray Monk, "a leggy 17-year-old blonde came to see us as Madonna. She sang well, but she looked the spitting image of Twiggy and we see hundreds of Madonnas but no Twiggy. So we suggested that she did Twiggy instead, even though she'd never heard of her. We always get a huge number of Neil Diamonds and Roy Orbisons, and we had thousands of Elvises in the early days, but we got them all out of the way with an Elvis special. We usually have a massive surplus of Karen Carpenters, one or two of whom unfortunately turn out to be size 24s."

A striking physical similarity is not a criterion, but a passing resemblance helps, for it can usually be accentuated by Granada's make-up queen, Glenda Wood. "I've been doing this for 36 years," says Wood, as she slaps foundation cream on David Essex. "I've made up four *Prime Suspects*, four prime ministers and Dustin Hoffman. But this show is my favourite. I haven't a clue who they are. Doris Day and Ruby Murray, that's my limit. But they're a lovely lot. Neil Diamond let us shave his head, but we nearly had a disaster with Stevie Wonder, because his beard pulled his bald cap back."

Continued on page 2



Stars in Their Eyes will feature, above left to right, country singer LeAnn Rimes in make-up, wardrobe and on stage. To be confused with the real LeAnn, far right



INSIDE	Letters	2	Obituaries	10-11	Country & Garden	17-18	Sunday's TV	30
	Leaders and comment	3-7	Arts	12-13	Travel	19-27	Radio	31
	Features	8-9	Books	14-16	Miscellany	29	Today's TV	32
								NINE PAGES OF TRAVEL

2/LETTERS

TOMORROW IN THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY REVIEW



Rachel Weisz explains why the paparazzi don't love her any more



Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall on the perils of eating fish

CULTURE



Charlotte Rampling asks what's wrong with making Miss Havisham sexy

REAL LIFE



Why men who look like this get all the best jobs

PLUS
Alain de Botton
Simon Singh
AN Wilson
Brian Viner



National Orchestras Week No 6: Conductor John Wilson having some fun during a Mad Hatter's Tea Party Concert by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic David Rose

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk (e-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address). Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Budget losers

Sir: Gordon Brown's Budget has hit motorists once again. The average motorist will pay an extra £50 a year in fuel tax, but it will be the less well-off, drivers of diesel cars and rural motorists, who will be hardest hit.

While most motorists will pay an extra £5 for their tax disc, Labour's plans to tax more heavily large-engined cars ignored the environmental friendliness of different cars. Some large, well maintained engines are much less polluting than older, smaller, un-maintained engines.

The £25m road tax on lorries and the 33p per gallon on diesel will hit all of us as consumers because they will raise prices. It will also hit us all because the revenue will lose income as more lorry operators licence their vehicles in Europe and fill up over the Channel.

Research shows that petrol prices would have to treble overnight to force people out of their cars. If sticks are to be used to get us out of our cars, carrots need to be in place first. Dr ROBERT R F KINGHORN London W4

Sir: Recently, a Royal Commission recommended a scheme to support the elderly in reasonable care, with expenses split between the state and the individual. The estimated cost of £1bn was too much for the Government. "More consideration" was needed, which is politico-speaking for shelving it.

Within weeks, the Government announced tax levels of 10 per cent and 22 per cent, costing £2bn and £2.8bn respectively. Your Budget Review (10 March) showed smiling faces, but not from the 40,000 people a year forced to sell their homes to provide for their care. Perhaps they have nothing to smile about, after being stripped of the only asset which they have saved for their old age?

This government was elected to get away from this slight of hand. If justice towards the elderly does not move them, they should consider that the sons and

daughters of the 40,000 have votes to register their disgust in the forthcoming elections. W R HAINES Copthorne, Cheshire

Sir: The Hallett's total weekly income appears to be about £314 (allowing £28 per week from dividends) yet they claim to be badly done by ("Some savings - but more were needed").

Their "outgoings are minimal" and they "can live and eat". What do they eat, lobster and caviar? They can "pay electricity and gas bills", everything on full blast 24 hours a day? Perhaps if they cut down on their extravagant lifestyle they could repair the house and buy a new TV.

There are many families with both children and maximum outgoings living on the Hallett's income. The truth is that the Halletts, like many others with a more-than-adequate pension, are just plain greedy and expect people that work to fund a pre-retirement lifestyle. D E BUCKLEY Knowlesborough, North Yorkshire

Sir: In the wake of the Chancellor's family Budget could we now have an honest debate about the assumed virtues of the family?

Is it the case that couples who produce children are really thinking about the benefits which they are bringing to society? Or are they just satisfying themselves when they procreate?

If the latter, why should they be thought more deserving than the single and childless? Should we not be thinking of discouraging large families by the tax regime (as in the US) instead of encouraging them?

What was there in the Budget for the single and for childless couples? E WILLIAMS Altrincham, Greater Manchester

Sir: "The elderly disabled and rural residents are totally dependent on the car" declares the RAC in a heart-rendingly emotional

response to Budget fuel price rises ("Buy smaller car, drivers are warned").

If the RAC's conscience is really troubling its new owners so heavily, perhaps they might consider offering their services free to these needy groups, cross-subsidising this by raising charges to young, fit townies. Or, if they are really serious, they would be negotiating with government for direct subsidies to groups in need.

I do not suppose, however, that business or political logic will appeal to the professional whingers who make up the motor lobby. My RAC subscription renewal will go into the bin. PETER D BROWN London N1

Sir: This year's Budget has outlined plans for government to contribute £30 to every donation of at least £100. It has also encouraged corporate donations by reducing the level for gift aid from £250 to £100, and encouraging give-as-you-earn.

The Children's Trust, however, is disappointed that the Government has not seen fit to ease the burden of irrecoverable VAT. In 1998 we were unable to recover £125,000 on costs incurred providing services to profoundly disabled children.

We hope that the Government will reconsider. J A DICK The Children's Trust Tadworth, Surrey

Sir: The Government's latest tax increase, which puts 17.5p on a packet of 20 cigarettes, will devastate low-income smokers and force more people into dishonestly buying cheap smuggled cigarettes.

The Chancellor is flying in the face of economic reality. He admits it is a tax he cannot properly collect yet he continues to increase it.

How long will it be before the Government realises that reducing tax is the only way to stop this social and economic chaos? KENNETH TORRUCKE-BARTON Fair Cigarette Tax Campaign, Tonbridge, Kent

Debt waste

Sir: Last time round, Comic Relief raised about £26m for UK and Third World charities. Sub-Saharan Africa repays that much in debt repayments to the West every day.

For every pound this country gives in aid to Third World countries, it takes £3 back in debt repayments.

Cancelling Third World debt would not cost this government a significant amount. The Jubilee 2000 campaign has said that the total cost of its debt relief proposals is only as much as the USA spends on going to the cinema each year.

The Treasury is not expecting to ever receive the money back, and has made arrangements so that it will not be missed. ALASTAIR TOMLINSON Cardiff

Depression hope

Sir: As a lifelong supporter of Liverpool FC I was vociferous in my condemnation of Stan Collymore during his time at Anfield. As a sufferer from depressive illness I have greater empathy with him as I read of events at Aston Villa ("Collymore" should be in hospital "say doctors", 10 March).

I too have been told by my employer that my recovery is not proceeding as rapidly as they require. Timescales for recovery are to be measured in months or years, not days or weeks. This is as hard to accept for the sufferer as for the employer.

As a society we have a serious issue to face in the causes and effects of depressive illness. Provided sound medical advice confirms the diagnoses, it is imperative that the sufferer be given maximum support and minimum pressure.

Like Collymore I fervently hope to be able to fully resume my career, but medication and cognitive therapy coupled with a reduced workload is the only way forward.

Aston Villa will get their striker back in the form they

want if they show genuine understanding and patience now. If you have a broken leg people see the problem and adjust their approach.

Depressives usually appear "normal" and this is taken as indicating that no problem exists. I would join Collymore, and many others, in a plea for greater openness, awareness and understanding.

We are not charlatans, but ill people in need of support and treatment. We can, and many will, fully recover. Name and address supplied

Feminist challenge

Sir: Jennifer Worth suggests that 48 per cent of top nursing posts are filled from the 7 per cent of nurses that happen to be male because "the vast majority of women want and need to be dominated by men" (letter, 11 March).

What nonsense - the problem with women is that they want and need to dominate their families, and are willing to forgo domination of their workmates to achieve this.

The majority of women have children and immediately seize primary responsibility for childcare, resenting any handover of this to their partners.

The extra commitments that come with senior management are unattractive because they reduce the mother's presence and influence at home.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that women accepting promotion while their children are small often do it out of insecurity or lack of assertiveness - to "pull their weight" after taking time off or because they fear redundancy or loss of "high-flyer" status.

The more secure or assertive will turn promotions down or reduce their hours as far as financially possible to spend more time at home.

As the father's status at home is reduced to a supporting role, promotion over his workmates becomes a major attraction.

The fact is that men, who don't have much to do at home, pick up the senior jobs

that women are too busy to do. It has little to do with any discrimination by men against women or any need by women to be bossed about by men.

The challenge for feminists is: how do you get women to choose senior management over control of childcare and the home? KATHERINE KIRK Bristol

Sir: Jennifer Worth is quite misguided in her concept of feminism.

Feminism is not about making men and women the same but about making them equal.

Women are not dominated by men; it is the structure of our society that values the skills and abilities of men more than those of women.

So until nurses are recognised and recompensed as equal to, say, accountants, the feminists will continue to scream about it. CAROLYN EAGER London E15

IN BRIEF

Sir: Tony Banks' likening of William Hague to a foetus was doubtless meant to provoke laughter (You ask the questions, 10 March). But that wasn't what caused offence to people. It was the tasteless jibe about abortion that accompanied it. MIKE FARISH London SE13

Sir: Paul Freeman asserts that "foxhunting is a sport" (letter, 12 March).

I'll accept this when I turn to the sports page and see a headline along the lines of "Foxes beat hunters 11-8". PAUL ROBERTS San Francisco, California

Sir: If John Gale (letter, 10 March) really is unable to distinguish "one end of a combine harvester from another", I urge him never to stand "behind" one - lest he become a seriously modified crop. MICHAEL T PHILLIPS Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

Stars in their minds

Continued from page 1

It is no wonder that each series of *Stars in Their Eyes* costs Granada around £2m. The wigs are made to order, and cost up to £1,000 apiece. Beards cost £350. Very little expense is spared with costumes (Carol Vorderman's leather top, commissioned from the chap who made Uma Thurman's catsuit for *The Avengers*, cost £1,000). But in the drive to make contestants look like their alter egos, there is a line which Jane Macnaught insists must not be crossed.

"We don't give our Barry Manilows prosthetic noses," she says. "We don't let men do Shirley Bassey, though lots apply. And we don't cross ethnic boundaries. So

we don't black up, although we do tint down. Nat King Cole was a Liverpudlian with dark skin, and we helped him on his way a bit. But you have to be careful. We've had a few Pavarottis, but we have to work hard to stop them becoming Russ Abbott comedy padded men."

In the end, the only real showstopper is the song. And because of the demands of the advertisers, Ray Monk has to ensure that each arrangement lasts precisely two minutes, 45 seconds. "That usually devastates them," he says. "Especially the ones singing slow ballads. Tony Rich took quite a bit of consoling earlier today."

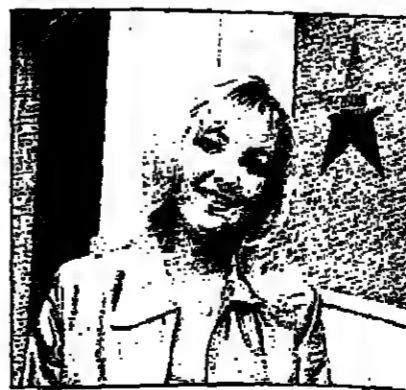
Also, permission has to be sought from

the original artists, only one of whom - Robert Smith from The Cure - unsportingly refused. Some of the original artists, in fact, are admirably supportive. The real Bryan Ferry sent Bryan Ferry a fax, and not only did the real Lisa Stansfield send Lisa Stansfield flowers, but the real Mr and Mrs Stansfield sent a good-luck card. "In a way, it's become like *Spitting Image*," says Macnaught. "A lot of politicians didn't like not having their own puppet, and it's the same here."

Moreover, record labels have cause to be grateful to *Stars in Their Eyes*, adds Matthew Kelly, who succeeded Leslie Crowther as host in 1993. "A Patsy Cline

retrospective album and a Marti Pellow album both shot up the charts significantly after our grand final one year," he says. "Also, our Marti Pellow was asked to sing to the real Marti Pellow at a party to celebrate his album going platinum. Hot Chocolate asked our Errol Brown to take over from the real Errol Brown. And our Jarvis Cocker has been fronting Jarvis Cocker's tour. He starts off, and then the real Jarvis wanders on stage."

All of which begs one question. Do most contestants, some of whom are already semi-professional, hope to use the show as a stepping-stone to fame and fortune? Macnaught thinks not. "Some of



Becky Goodwin is LeAnn Rimes...

them may do," she says. "But plenty are content with their 15 minutes of fame. Last year's grand final was only the second time Billie Holiday had sung in public."

It is now showtime. The audience is laughing at a warm-up man. And backstage - at the bottom of what the production team, out of earshot of the contestants, call the "guillotine steps" - David Essex is pacing up and down whispering the words of "Hold Me Close". His real name is Christopher Not. But tonight, Matthew, that is really neither here nor there.

'Stars in Their Eyes' begins tonight at 7.30pm on ITV

Joe Viner 150

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Today NATO grows bigger. Tomorrow it must be Europe

THESE ARE difficult times for Nato, as it searches for a new doctrine, even a new *raison d'être*, now that the Cold War that was the reason for its very existence is over, and the Soviet Union is no more. But we can all wholeheartedly rejoice at yesterday's ceremony in Independence, Missouri, the birthplace of president Harry Truman, under whom the alliance was created exactly 50 years ago.

The formal accession to the alliance of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary belatedly corrects one of the great injustices of modern European history. For these "lands in the middle", trapped between Germany and Russia, this has been a dislocating and terrible century, of invasion, war, occupation and - for most of the last half of it - subjection to the alien and disastrous ideology of Communism. All three of them are now anchored where they belong, in Europe's geopolitical mainstream, as equal members of the Atlantic community. A Polish politician has described the event as the most important moment for his country in 1,000 years. He was hardly exaggerating.

But what now? Nine other countries want to join Nato, ranging from the Baltic countries in the north to Romania, Slovenia and Bulgaria in the south. The "outs" seek the cachet that goes with membership of any successful club. They are convinced, too, that Nato membership offers a fast track into the European Union. Above all, however, and like yesterday's three entrants, they see Nato as the one cast-iron guarantee of protection that they can have against any future threat from Russia.

There is, none the less, no hurry. Not long ago, the fashionable fear was that Nato expansion would draw another dividing line through Europe, to the east of the former Iron Curtain. But nothing of the sort has happened. In fact, the very gravitational pull of the alliance has made the "outs" feel safer, prodding them into settling disputes that, in an earlier age, could have led to conflict. Further blurring distinctions is the alliance's eminently successful Partnership for Peace programme, strengthening co-operation between Nato and its non-member neighbours.

However grudgingly, Russia has accepted that the inclusion of the first three Warsaw Pact members was inevitable. But we should take Moscow at its word when it says that it will not tolerate membership by the three Baltic states, or any other former Soviet republics. The rhetoric may be mainly bluster, and have less to do with legitimate strategic considerations than Russia's eternal paranoia about its security. Today, as it casts around for a new "strategic concept", Nato is debating whether to extend its area of operations further afield, into the Middle East and beyond.

But, in the long run, the greatest challenge will be to find a lasting accommodation with its great eastern neighbour. Currently, Russia is no threat, but who is to say that it will remain so? Scenting new contracts, the powerful US defence industry is pressing hard for Nato enlargement. But the alliance wisely prefers to use the hull to create a new relationship with Moscow, rather than indulge in provocative gestures that could bring to power a more nationalistic, anti-Western regime. No new invitations will be issued at the



alliance's birthday summit in Washington next month. Instead, the onus is on Europe. Now, it is unfair to criticise the EU for the slow pace of negotiation with candidate members from the former Eastern bloc. Joining a military alliance is a simple and much less expensive matter than entering a far more advanced economic bloc, with all the hideously complicated negotiations that that entails. But the momentum for

EU expansion must not be allowed to flag - nor the efforts that are under way, led by Britain and France, to endow the Union with a common foreign and security policy worthy of the name.

For Moscow, Europe is a far less threatening entity than Nato. But a broad and strong EU, capable of tending to its own defence, would offer a guarantee no less tempting than the one provided by Nato today.

Whenever possible, get children out of care

ADOPTION HAS been given a bad name by the ideologues of the Christian right. Their message was that lone mothers, especially young, poor ones, should give up their babies for adoption rather than bring them up in the morally corrupting environment of a fatherless family. It was a harsh, impractical and morally wrong message and was quietly buried by compassionate Conservatives in the last Government. But the Tories produced no positive policy on adoption.

Jack Straw deserves praise for at least attempting to rethink policy from first principles, and the first principle in this case must be the interests of children. Once the debate is freed from the unhelpful stigmatising of lone parents, it can focus on the real problem with adoption, which is that there is not enough of it. This is not to say that children should be taken away from lone parents, but that they should be taken away from council care homes, which are generally by far the worst environment in which to bring up children.

It does not need a welter of statistics to prove that children in care tend to perform worst at school, are more likely to get involved in crime and are more likely to end up unemployed. The gap between the likely outcomes of a childhood spent in care and one spent in a family motivated enough to adopt is enormous, and the obstacles placed in the way of adopting are baffling.

So-called political correctness is part of the explanation, and it is disappointing that relaxing the restrictions on cross-racial adoption seems to have had so little effect in practice. Other excuses for ruling out adopters, on the grounds that they smoke, or are too old, too fat or too middle-class, are also supposed to have been swept away. But political correctness cuts both ways - there is no reason why gay couples should not adopt, for example. The real problem is the hostile and defensive culture of too many social services departments. They tend to regard adoption as a last resort, and use the aim of restoring children to their natural families as an excuse for inaction. Fostering is a useful middle way, but policy should be to move towards adoption rather than revert to institutional care.

If the Home Secretary concludes that he cannot change the culture of social services departments quickly enough, he would be justified in taking the business of adoption placement away from councils and giving it to non-profit agencies. The welfare of children is too important for institutional inertia to decide their fate.

The Menuhin legacy

BRITAIN OWES Yehudi Menuhin a great debt and more than a moment's thought at his passing. What he brought this country when he came from America during the war was not only considerable musicianship, but a real devotion to public causes and musical education. His services to building bridges with Germany just after the war, the Communist world during the Cold War, and the Third World more recently, required courage and imagination. Yes he was vain, dictatorial and difficult, but he was also a great humanist, both in his belief in the healing power of art and in his willingness to give his all to it. At a time when musical education at school and political commitment by artists are being downgraded, his is a Jewish humanist legacy that we badly need to sustain.

Time to wake up to the false dawn of Africa's renaissance

AND SO another terrible few weeks for Africa. Weeks when the old "heart of darkness" cliché galloped from one headline to another, when the tentative hope about an African renaissance vanished into the rainforest and even the most loyal friends of the continent struggled to put any kind of positive spin on the news from down below.

We have had thousands butchered in Sierra Leone, Hutu rebels murdering tourists in Uganda, Laurent Kabila arresting diplomats and locking up his political opponents in Congo, and God knows what kind of brutality and corruption across the river in Congo Brazzaville. Up in the Horn of Africa Ethiopia and Eritrea are engaged in a full-scale war; Mugabe's goons are torturing journalists in Zimbabwe; and Daniel arap Moi's cronies are suggesting that the Kenyan constitution be abandoned and that he be allowed to run for a third five-year term.

I was going to stop with my examples there, but what the hell. Take a quick glance through the Africa news on any of the wire services and consider the sorry evidence.

I see that in Burundi the Tutsi army is rampaging once again; in Guinea the opposition leader is on hunger strike in prison; in Sudan oppression and suffering continue much as usual. Right in the heart of the continent something of the order of nine African armies are engaged in a major war for strategic dominance of the Great Lakes region. Nine armies and an ocean of miserable, terrorised civilians are being driven back and forth across the landscape by the rampant soldiery.

But if you confront any of the tyrants, they will invariably tell you that it is all the fault of colonialism. For sure, historical responsibility for the



FERGAL KEANE
There are small moves forward, but a great ocean of suffering persists which eats away at hope

drawing of insane borders lies with the Europeans who caused the scramble for Africa; we know that the racism and greed of the colonial era created a dangerous mix of anger and inferiority; and that when independence came the people of Africa were, by and large, left to the mercies of a new ruling class that had neither the training or the inclination to rule in a just or competent manner. And, yes, the Western powers and the Soviet bloc did their best to destroy Africa in the Sixties and Seventies by sponsoring their favoured dictators.

But at the end of all this, we are confronted with the responsibility of African leaders for African problems. To look back and blame outsiders may offer a measure of mental comfort, but it strikes me as being rather similar to the tactic of a child who has been brought up in an abusive home and blames the anti-social behaviour of his adult years on his parents. There comes a time when the past ceases to be an alibi, and here, at the turn of the 20th century, we have surely reached that point.

The other familiar complaint is that the Western media only ever show the bad side of Africa, that we have a racist obsession with war and famine, that our reporting is based on outdated views of the continent. There is a partial truth in this view, but it tends to avoid the main issue.

I come from an island where the habit of murder has brought us massive media attention. For more than three decades, the news from Northern Ireland was invariably dominated by violence, the threat of violence and the attempts to end the violence. And while I have heard myself carping occasionally about the foreign media's

obsession with the IRA and their loyalist enemies, I know they were right to focus on the violence and the suffering. That was the fundamental reality, and it affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

Ireland's sectarian crisis was not the creation of the media, nor was it caused by journalists wanting to show only the bad side of Ireland. The same goes for the former Yugoslavia or any other troubled area.

The media can distort and misrepresent. They can make things worse. The absence of context and the oversimplification of issues (particularly in countries such as Rwanda) can create an atmosphere in which Western governments simply throw their hands up and refuse to engage with Africa. But please don't imagine that if we stopped reporting the famines and wars of Africa, they would disappear. They would be out of sight and out of mind but would, I suggest, be even more prolonged and vicious.

We face an utterly depressing reality in Africa. There are small moves forward here and there but a great ocean of suffering persists, which year by year eats away at hope, and pushes Africa and the Africans further away from our concern and interest.

Do you remember the "African renaissance"? Just two years ago our pages were full of optimistic words about a continent that finally seemed to be pulling itself out of the mire. Do you remember the editorials and the features lauding the new African dawn? They seem embarrassing now.

How desperate we were to believe in the idea of a continent-wide rebirth, of an Africa whose leaders would prove just and decent and whose people would enjoy freedom from fear and hunger. The era of what Wole Soyinka called the "Toad Kings" - Mobutu and friends - was over, we believed. The old monster was driven out of Zaïre and died in exile but, surprise surprise, a new monster replaced him. We wanted to believe that Laurent Kabila was our kind of fellow, a new African who would bring stability and the rule of law to the Congo. And so we refused to acknowledge his dubious past; we embraced the politics of wishful thinking.

Kabila was just another despotic crook, but in our rush to believe in an African renaissance we supported him. Now that he has started locking up Western diplomats (he has been locking up his own people since he came to power), we start to ask questions about the nature of the regime we once enthusiastically supported.

The natural answer to all of this is to point to relative success stories in countries such as Uganda, or to mention Nigeria's recent transition to democracy. But, as Nigerian history

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OSKAR LAFONTAINE'S RESIGNATION

European reaction to the resignation of Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's finance minister

HANDELSBLATT
Germany

THE GOVERNMENT is in serious crisis. Schröder has won the power struggle against Lafontaine. But Lafontaine's resignation also damages Schröder. Schröder and his finance minister now have a chance to switch to a policy that encourages investments: a modern reform policy which Schröder supported in talks with industry before the election. The Chancellor has the opportunity of a fresh start.

Chancellors, he will strive to become SPD chairman. But will the Party go along with this? Since Lafontaine's resignation comes at same time as SPD-FDP agreement on the new citizenship law, and since FDP has given signals of possible change of direction, Green members of the Cabinet will now tremble. If Schröder has a chance of changing coalition partners, then it is now. It would be an operation filled with deadly risk. But perhaps Schröder's system of power has already collapsed.

LE FIGARO
France

LAFONTAINE FOUGHT hard to obtain his position as a Superminister of Finance. At the head of the Social Democratic party, he believed himself to have the Chancellor in the palm of his hand and to be the true director of the "Red-Green" coalition, which he had tailored to his own measures. But he became blinded by his own power. He believed that Germany was ready to follow his radical policies, his last error being to recommend a reconciliation/realignment with the former Communists of the Eastern bloc. As in France, when in 1981 the socialists had come to power after a long stint in opposition, Schröder's honeymoon period will be marked by a brief shift towards the left. Now that Lafontaine has left the Government, the Chancellor, who still retains all his popularity, has room to manoeuvre. It is now up to him to make sense of the slogan, "New Centre", which he coined during his electoral campaign.

SÜDDEUTSCHE
ZEITUNG
Germany

LAFONTAINE HAS thrown in the towel; he has capitulated to Schröder. His resignation has transformed Schröder's "keep-smiling" Cabinet overnight into a smoking ruin. It confirms that practically every possible mistake has been made. Schröder kept appearing as master of the house, but did not realise that the house was about to collapse. It is not the Greens who have plunged this government into crisis, but Schröder and the SPD.

GENERAL-ANZEIGER
Germany

THE GOVERNMENT crisis is bigger and more dangerous than any crisis under Kohl. Lafontaine's resignation means that Red-Green have lost the decisive guarantor of this alliance. Erosion of power might now begin to accelerate.

FRANKFURTER
ALLGEMEINE
ZEITUNG
Germany

THE POWER struggle has been settled, but we shall have to wait and see whether the winner will be able to enjoy his triumph. Even Schröder probably cannot calculate the impact of Lafontaine's resignation on the SPD. If Schröder follows the advice of former

LIBÉRATION
France

WITH THE departure of Lafontaine, the most notorious figure of the German left fades away. Is Schröder really now the sole master of the destiny of the "New Centre"? Certainly, the departure of Oskar Lafontaine rids him of a loud and embarrassing rival, and relieves him of the necessity of resolving the contradictions that amplified their animosity.

This is a socialist budget

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

FOR ALL the rhetoric, this is a socialist Budget that aims to shift incentives and benefits to the advantage of the poor and recipients of state welfare. This is a perfectly honourable agenda, and it is being carried out in a prudent and responsible fashion. But Labour cannot have it both ways. It cannot redistribute money from taxpayers towards state dependants and at the same time pretend to be the defenders of tax-paying Middle Britain.

THE MIRROR

THIS WAS an unashamedly political Budget with the Chancellor offering carrots today with further incentives to come, while not dwelling on the disappointments in his bag. But in the final analysis this should not detract from the fact that it was also a Budget we desperately needed. He almost performed a political miracle and pleased all of the people but perhaps the Holyrood Budget has in effect done just that. No one can predict accurately the vagaries of the ballot box, but Scots drinkers, who saw no increase in their tipple, might not be alone in raising a glass to their canny cousin at No 11 Downing Street come election day.

THE TIMES

WHEN COMPANIES cannot complain and Tories struggle to oppose, Labour backbenchers ought to be suspicious. Yet Mr Brown has also managed to deliver on many old Labour objectives. This Budget represents the essence of new Labour: delivering many of its traditional aims in a sophisticated and popular way which puts its opponents in all sorts of trouble.

THE ECONOMIST

THIS WAS a budget for all of the themes for all the people - men and women, young and old, big and small, six of one and half a dozen of the other. We stand in awe of Mr Brown's vision. We question only whether he has any idea what he's doing. He appears to forget that fiscal complexity feeds on itself; that it creates anomalies that call



THE BUDGET

Verdicts on the 1999 Budget presented on Tuesday by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer

about the only recognition by the state that marriage is something to be cherished and remains a potent symbol of official approval. In throwing that symbol away, New Labour is in effect saying that marriage is no different from any other relationship, however feckless or transient. That is a tragic misjudgement which one day may return to haunt a Chancellor who in so many other respects delivered a remarkable, if over-busy, Budget. But many will feel in his forecast for economic growth, Mr Brown has been overly optimistic.

DAILY RECORD

THERE CAN now be no doubt this is a government that supports the family. Every family will be better off and there has been a marked switch to poorer homes with children. Gordon Brown is a Chancellor with a sense of history. He presented the last budget of the 20th century, but it was really a Budget for Britain - and Scotland - in the new millennium.

THE GUARDIAN

THERE IS no point in expanding the economy any more at this time because the large increases in public spending announced last year will only come into effect next month at a time when the recent series of interest rate cuts will also start to stimulate the economy. Maybe it's a good time for the Chancellor to take a honeymoon or something, and leave the next step to Eddie George and his colleagues at the Bank of England. Sometimes a governor's got to do what a governor's got to do.

FINANCIAL TIMES

WHAT WOULD be reassuring would be some indication that Mr Brown has a sense of the wider architecture of the tax system and the need for simplicity if tax measures to improve productivity are to work. Stability is not just a requirement of macro-economic management. If the sticks and carrots of the tax and benefit system are constantly changing, all planning, whether for business investment, an income in retirement, or even the family budget, becomes unduly hazardous.

DAILY MAIL

TO CALL this a "Budget for the family" is a wretched misuse of language, when marriage - that great safeguard of children's interests - no longer seems to matter. Of course, people don't get married merely for the sake of a relatively minor tax concession. But the allowance is just

forth new rules and complications; that it diverts effort and resources into tax avoidance rather than wealth creation. Above all, he forgets a golden rule of public finance that he would do well to put alongside his rule on public borrowing: every tax preference is an increase in taxes on everything else. That is why budgets of all the themes for all the people are pointless.

STANLEY KUBRICK'S DEATH

The world's press pays tribute to film-maker Stanley Kubrick following his unexpected death aged 70

BERGEN RECORD
US

MR KUBRICK distrusted authority to the point where he moved to England in the early 1960s and made his maverick films according to his own schedule. The irony is that he ultimately became the sort of autocratic figure that his films might have skewered. On the set, he was known as a tyrant who insisted on countless retakes and revisions in his quest for celluloid perfection. Mr Kubrick may have been autocratic, but his demanding personality created landmark films, and images that will remain etched in our memory.



other is his cinematic inventiveness. Unlike some of today's directors, Kubrick was not shocking for the sake of being shocking, and never bland. He was a serious man doing serious work, and the images he wrought will surely remain alive in the minds of millions for many years.

USA TODAY

of film. His successes were few but so genuine that they intimidated Hollywood into giving him unprecedented control over his projects, which the studios seemed grateful to release and terrified to tinker with. In the end, his greatest triumph was a triumph of the will.

KUBRICK MADE movies that drew critical and popular praise, despite stories that were innately disturbing. Artists like Kubrick make their mark and serve their higher purpose by challenging the established order. Yet, who needs the arts to question the establishment when the establishment itself is so cockeyed? When the nation is obliged to reconsider the meaning of presidential sex to the sex of a Teletubby, then the Kubrickian take on life is not just a disturbing vision, but a disturbing reality.

THE STUART
NEWS
US

TWO FACTS especially stand out about Kubrick. One is that he was not afraid of ideas, and the

SYDNEY MORNING
HERALD
Australia

A LARGE part of his legacy will rest on his reputation. But even if it's great, Kubrick will represent an enigma wrapped inside a riddle inserted in a can

WEST INDIAN CRICKET

Assessment of cricket in the West Indies following their thrashing by Australia

THE AUSTRALIAN

WEST INDIES cricket is bankrupt of ability and inspiration. It is not merely inept, it is as uneducated as it is uncharacteristic, and as unedifying as it is unacceptable.

THE JAMAICA
GLENER

BRIAN LARA is being taught one of life's harshest lessons. That lesson is the extent to which the things we covet the most can turn around to mock us. From all appearances, there is nothing that Lara wanted more than the captaincy of the West Indies. In the process he did all that he could, and some not-so-nice things, to become captain. Now that he is, he has not led the West Indies to its greatest glory, but rather into the worst ever nightmare of our cricket history.

The only way Lara is going to silence his critics is with the

bat. That is the instrument of his genius. He must now make it the source of his own redemption, and that of West Indies cricket. (Errol Miller)

THE SYDNEY
MORNING
HERALD
Australia

THE WEST Indies' performance was so harrowing as to leave the impartial viewer with a sense of disbelief. Their hope for an immediate recovery is out of their hands.

TRINIDAD
EXPRESS

I AGREE with Carl Hooper a West Indian allrounder: abandon the West Indies team until these matters are put right. He is absolutely correct not to want to suffer humiliation and embarrassment by playing with mediocre players. (Odas Ramischand)

RIGHT TO ROAM BILL

Opinions on the Government's decision to introduce a statutory right to roam

THE DAILY
TELEGRAPH

HAD HE listened to country people, Mr Meacher would know that landowners and farmers have never been more willing to co-operate voluntarily in giving walkers access to their land. Mr Meacher chose to listen to the Ramblers' Association and other pressure groups, for whom a walk in the country is more an act of aggression in the class war than a chance to enjoy the smell of country air.

THE YORKSHIRE
POST

THE RAMBLERS Association likes to claim that there are millions of people who want the unfettered right to struggle through heather and over untracked scree. No doubt there are a few intrepid - if not foolhardy - souls who would derive enjoyment from such pursuits. But Mr Meacher was not ad-

dressing them. He was speaking to that militant minority for whom the Kinder Pass trespass is still a vivid event, and for whom the property-owning classes are an implacable foe. This was not New Labour, but Old Labour at its worst.

THE EXPRESS

THE SWEDES, the Germans, the Danes, the Norwegians and the Swiss all enjoy the right to walk over all, or much of, their countryside. It's not too much to ask that we too should have a right on a similar scale to the rights our European neighbours enjoy. If we are ever to have a citizens' Britain, with a proper mix of rights and duties, it ought surely to include the right to move freely throughout the land of our birth. Never again should we ask people to risk their lives for their country in war and then deny them the opportunity to walk in it should they return. (Marion Shoat)

QUOTES OF
THE WEEK

"I've signed Meg Ryan's autograph more times than I've signed my own. If anyone comes up and says Sleepless in Seattle is their favourite, I just sign Meg Ryan." (Melanie Griffith, pictured, actor)

"I'm sorry, I don't talk to journalists." (Peter Mandelson, MP)

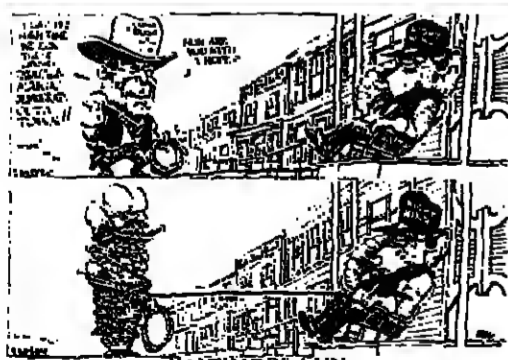
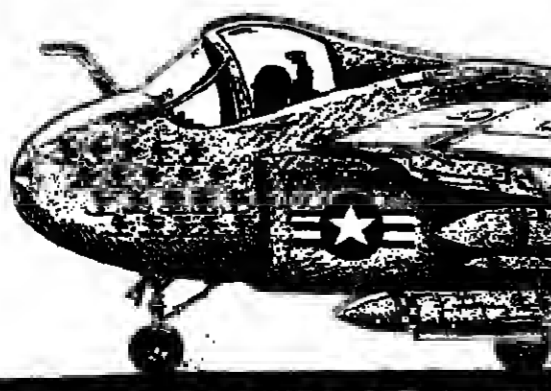
"Oskar Lafontaine has been the grit in the German oyster." (John Major, former prime minister)

"A lady of 92 left a message asking that I call her to suggest how she should replan her evening viewing now News at Ten had gone." (Trevor McDonald, newsreader)

"I didn't spend 10 years of hard labour creating a government, to knock it down." (Charles Whelan, former press secretary to Gordon Brown)

"What fascinates me is how people stay married for so long. I'm lucky if I can maintain a relationship for 20 minutes." (Julian Clary, actor)

THE VIEWS OF THE WORLD

BALTIMORE SUN
USPHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS
USTORONTO STAR
CanadaTHE MORNINGS OF ST. MORIS
MORNING HERALD
AustraliaLIANHE ZAORAO
Singapore

CARTOONS BY WALTER SIMONCINI

MISCELLANEOUS

Stories from around the world

THE OAKLAND
TRIBUNE
US

A PLEASANTON mother will have to write a letter of apology to three newspapers for allowing a stripper to perform for teenage girls at her home. The party was dubbed a "Girls' Night Out", hosted by the woman's 15-year-old daughter. The judge said that some of the girls who attended the party. None of the victims' parents attended the sentencing hearing and only two wrote their opinions in letters. The mother said she is sorry and that it was her daughter who hired the stripper.

HINDUSTAN TIMES
India

DELHI IS convulsed under a spate of violent crimes. The other day four members of a family, including two children, were brutally killed at their Nangloi home; a campus feud ended with the murder of a student and another student's father; 10,000,000 rupees were looted from a bank in Faridabad; an industrialist's son was shot at in Gurgaon after a protection-money demand was ignored; and two school-bound children were forced into a van and driven away in south-west Delhi, apparently by their estranged father.

RESEARCH BY SALLY CHATTERTON AND
LUKE CHAPUT DE SAINTONGE

150

It's Camilla Parker Bowles, bearing down on me

IT WAS a deal. My horse friend would take me to a horse auction in the morning and I would take her to a food fair in the evening. She is very greedy as well as very horse and wears a badge saying Le Galise Canapés. I got very excited at the prospect of a horse auction, imagining myself rubbing shoulders with gimlet-eyed bloodstock agents prepared to part with millions for a future Derby winner.

What on earth would I wear? All the women I felt sure would look like Camilla Parker Bowles, who someone close to the throne told me recently, once said to her daily "be a dear, Mrs P and have a look for my saddle. I know it's somewhere in my bedroom." Apparently she is very untidy but I don't think it matters if you're only morganatic.

"I've found a Hermes scarf to knot under my chin," I told my horse friend. "But I'm not sure about footwear. Green wellies or navy blue court shoes, plain but obviously expensive?"

Nicky laughed. It wasn't that sort of auction she said. It was basically gypsies selling dubiously acquired ponies to the knackers for horse meat. She was only going on the off chance that she might spot some of the tack she had stolen recently. The place was full of villains doing furtive deals in Romany behind trailers. As for the women... "But aren't gypsy girls ravishingly beautiful?" I interrupted. Remember the divine Esmeralda whose luminous beauty fired Frodo with such impious passion. Nicky laughed again. "Hard-faced bitch-

deals, the Romany, the women and, saddest of all, the ponies. Oh dear I'm not sure I'm going to be able to go on with this. There was this huge trailer parked just ahead of the fleet of shiny new £45,000, top of the range, four-wheel drive, long wheel-base Toyota Amazon VX's, in which most of the gypsy traders had arrived, out of which were stumbling the smallest, shaggiest, sweetest little ponies I have ever seen. One little black fellow, no bigger than a Labrador, fixed me with piteous pleading eyes. Surely these weren't going to end up on the butcher's slab? "They'll probably be curried by Friday," said Nicky absent-mindedly. She was looking at a fine big black horse with white socks tied to a rail. "Now what's a horse like him doing

in a place like this, I wonder? Probably his owner went bankrupt and the receiver has put him in for auction. Come on, I've had enough of this. Let's go and have lunch."

And then, just as we were turning out of the main yard, a plummy voice called, "I say, Sue, is that really you?" What on earth are you doing here?" And there was Camilla Parker Bowles, Hermes-scarfed and green-wellied bearing down on me. Not really, of course, but the nearest thing to it this side of Gloucestershire. I have known Virginia Gilling-Krapp for years, even occasionally stayed at her second-division Wiltshire stately with the usual quota of ponies, Labradors and children called Piers. When her husband ran off with a male model Virginia soldiered on bravely as

Wiltshire women do till the last little Gilling-Krapp went away to Eton and she sold the house and moved to Scotland.

"Gosh, Virginia, are you buying a pony for Piers?" I said, confused. She didn't seem to have changed a bit. "Good heavens, no, I'm here with Jim," she said, indicating a sinister figure with gold teeth, a gold earring and a gold Rolex making furtive deals in Romany behind a trailer. How Virginia came to leave Perthshire and run away with the raggle-taggle gypsies I never found out because Nicky said that if we didn't hurry we'd miss lunch because the Moti Mahal closed at two.

Bearing in mind her callous remark about the ponies it was an unfortunate choice, but my mind was too preoccupied with Virginia

and Jim to think about my curried sushi. As for the Food Fair, it was everything that a canapé addict dreams of - 97 different varieties of sushi served on glass trays which flashed blue zig-zag lighting whenever you grasped a loaded cocktail stick. To be perfectly honest I'm not crazy about sushi but at least you could tell it wasn't pony. "Have you any blowfish?" a connoisseur asked the Japanese chef. No, he said, it was out of season. Blowfish is poisonous, except in the mating season, which is the only time you can kill it. What's more, he added, if a chef serves a poisoned blowfish to a customer it happens sometimes the chef is required to commit harikari immediately. Too bad they don't make horse butchers do the same.

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SUE ARNOLD
When her husband ran off with a male model, she soldiered on bravely as Wiltshire women do

to Roam Bill
dget
of the only recognition by the state that...
DAILY RECORD
RE CAN now be no doubt this is a...
FINANCIAL TIMES
AT WELL-TO-DO...
QUOTES OF THE WEEK
ESS
TIME

THE SATURDAY PROFILE ELIZABETH DOLE, REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

The head girl of America

"I'M NOT a politician and, frankly, I think that's a plus today." When public figures - any public figures, anywhere - start disavowing their calling, you know they are seriously competing for office. And so it was with Elizabeth Dole this week, when she launched her bid for the world's top job, President of the United States.

While Mrs Dole's protestation rang a little hollow - she may not be a professional politician, but she is one of the most politically astute public figures around - there was a subtlety. What she did not say, but strongly implied, is: "I'm not a man and, frankly, I think that's a plus today." Thanks to the recent emergence into public esteem of a slew of senior female politicians, and President Clinton's very male extra-curricular activities in the White House, she could be right.

In a country where the position of women in public life, especially those parts of it where real power resides, is less advanced than Americans like to believe, Elizabeth Dole has already achieved something remarkable. In the three months since she first broached the possibility of running for president, no one has laughed. No one has suggested that she go back to "cookie-baking"; no one has told the "little woman" that she should be at home with her family. No one has said, or even hinted, that she could not do the job because she is a woman, and only a very few have muttered that she has got where she is only because of her husband.

The evident competence - if not always effectiveness - of the women in President Clinton's cabinet may have contributed to the new climate, as may the down-to-earth performance of women representatives, and especially senators, during the President's impeachment trial. A number of female senators - including Dianne Feinstein, Barbara Boxer and Susan Collins - came to national prominence and showed senior women politicians in a positive light compared to their often fussy and preening male colleagues. For the first time, opinion polls say, the vast majority of American voters (more than 90 per cent) are prepared to contemplate the possibility of a woman president.

Much of the credit for Mrs Dole's acceptability, however, is hers, and derives from the experience and professional credentials that she brings to her bid. She is also a wealthy, well-connected woman who is judged to have more than a sporting chance of raising the \$20m-plus that is the unofficial entrance fee to a presidential race.

Mrs Dole's CV may not conform to the conventional pattern for presidential nominees: the Senate, a state governorship, or success in military leadership. But then women's CVs, reflecting family responsibilities, outsider status and glass ceilings, often seem unconventional. Now 62, she has served in the administrations of no fewer than six presidents, starting with Lyndon Johnson (she was then a Democrat). She has held cabinet office

twice: as transport secretary under Ronald Reagan and as labour secretary under George Bush. In 1991, she left the Bush administration - which turned out to be an astute move - to become president of the American Red Cross. She spent her first year as an unpaid volunteer to demonstrate her commitment to the idea of public service - a luxury, her detractors would point out, that she could afford only because of her husband's wealth.

This week, Mrs Dole sought to banish rumouring criticism that these jobs had been just patronage appointments, where she was little more than a figurehead. "I'm no seat-warmer," she told her audience in

litical audiences, and those who receive her attention and largesse, Elizabeth Dole appears endlessly charming in a very courtly, Southern way. Despite her decades in Washington she has retained - deliberately or not - her Southern accent, which only enhances the impression, frequently alluded to, of a "Southern belle".

To colleagues, however, especially the closest, she is said to be testy under pressure, and self-contained. She prepares meticulously for meetings and expects others to do the same. She likes to be private and in control, keeping the door to her office at the Red Cross shut and requiring others to warn her on the intercom rather than turn up at her office unannounced.

Some of these traits seem to have begun very early in her life. She was born Elizabeth Hanford, the second child and only daughter of a well-to-do flower wholesaler and his wife in the pretty town of Salisbury in North Carolina. Her mother, who is still alive at the age of 95 - and school contemporaries describe a perfectionist who became desperately upset by any failure, whether it was a less-than-excellent mark or forgetting to return a book. She appears to have taken herself, and her prospects, very seriously indeed from an early age, and she still does. Three years ago she snugged at a television interviewer who called her "Liddy", the childhood nickname reserved for family and close friends.



Lady in waiting: Elizabeth Dole's presidential hopes rest on her professional credentials - and wealth Reuters

Growing up in a highly respectable Southern town at a time when young women were expected to marry and have children, Elizabeth proved an unusual combination. On the one hand, she appears to have applied great efforts to conform to what was expected of a Southern girl in terms of manner, grooming and accomplishments. There is much of that school-girlishness about her even today, the rather superficial cheer-leading style and bubble-headed enthusiasm that can be both endearing and exasperating.

It hardly needs to be said that she was head girl, May Queen and class president at college (the last elected position she held) and went after pretty much any distinction that was on offer. On the other hand, while she was pushed by her parents to achieve academically she seems to have been a more than willing accomplice. From school, she went to the premier Southern university, Duke, and from there to Harvard where she majored first in education and then, to the evident distress of her mother, who thought it high time she found a worthy husband, took a law degree. She was one of only 50 women among more than 2,000 men at the Harvard Law School.

She then embarked on a career in what she and her former colleagues call public service, but is otherwise known as the Washington hurestocracy - or politocracy. A junior job in consumer affairs in the Johnson administration led to a succession of administrative posts. Politically, she went from being a registered Democrat (working for Johnson) to an independent (working for Nixon), finally becoming a

Republican soon after her marriage to Robert Dole, then a senator for his native state of Kansas.

She was 39 when she married, and it was Robert Dole's second marriage (after divorce). They have not had children. Just as with Hillary Clinton, some have seen the Dole marriage as a political partnership that opened a route to political influence at the price of any political ambitions Elizabeth Dole might have had in her own right. But such a view is probably as wrong in relation to Mrs Dole as it is in relation to Mrs Clinton. Those were different times, and Elizabeth Dole never attached herself ideologically to the feminist cause as such, despite a career that has been, in many respects, pioneering.

She has always used her married name and title, and supported her husband's political career to the hilt, culminating in her 20-minute tribute to him at the 1996 Republican convention when she went among the crowd with her microphone on the manner of a talk-show host, delighting and shocking her audience by turns. She was even said to have mapped out for herself how she would handle the job of First Lady - but that was not to be.

In the early Eighties, Mrs Dole started taking her religion - she was brought up

and remains a Methodist - much more seriously. Some go so far as to say that she had a "religious experience". Belief in God and God's purpose for her is not something that can be underestimated. She carries a Bible with her wherever she goes and is said to devote at least half an hour every day to reading it, even when she is on the campaign trail.

This religious side to her character has not been without political benefits, as it has brought her followers and backers from the constituency of the religious right, which is so influential in the grass roots of the Republican Party. Just recently, however, whispering has been heard inside the party putting it about that Mrs Dole's brand of Christianity may not be fundamentalist enough for that section of the party.

The suggestion is that she may be a closet "liberal" and, specifically, that she may be "soft" on abortion - that touchstone issue for the American right. Such speculation appears to be based largely on her recruitment as adviser by a number of people regarded by the religious right as "liberals". Mrs Dole herself, however, has always opposed abortion.

Ideological flaws, however, may not be Mrs Dole's biggest liability in her quest for the Oval Office. Her manner and person-

ality may be. As a Southern woman fighting to be taken seriously in her chosen field, she may have had to conform to certain expectations of femininity to make her career; these could include the face-lift that makes her look embarrassingly closer to 40 than her 62 years. But the sing-song voice, actressy appearance and bouncy concern can seem cloying and ingratiating at times just plain silly.

Loosen up, you want to tell her; abandon the script that is stamped on your brain, drop the mask and tell us who you are. The last time Mrs Dole showed a flash of spontaneity was when she was surprised by a question about her husband's enthusiasm for the Viagra pill and cheerfully confirmed its efficacy. Maybe she needs a little less Prozac, and a little more Viagra?

When announcing the first stage of her campaign this week, Mrs Dole advertised an Internet website - now the essential accompaniment of any self-respecting contender for office. Unfortunately, www.edole2000.com is not quite ready. A logo with a roadworks sign says, in 11 languages: "This site is currently under construction. Please check back at a later date." Something similar could be said of Elizabeth Dole.

MARY DEJEVSKY

ACCIDENTAL HEROES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

31: ELSIE TANNER, SOAP OPERA HEROINE

THE CREATOR of *Coronation Street*, Tony Warren, is not only gay, he declares that there has never been a closet big enough to hide him. Indeed, he asserts that only a gay man could have created *Coronation Street*. As a small boy, confused about his sexuality, he scrutinised men and women to see what made them tick. And from those detailed observations were born the programme's original characters, and its staple mix of feckless men and strong women.

The legendary Ena Sharples was based on Warren's grandmother. And to play her, Warren, a former child actor, suggested a semi-retired actor who'd once smacked his bottom on *Children's Hour*, the formidable Violet Carson. For Warren,

though, as for most of the nation, the goddess of *Coronation Street* was the quick-tempered but warm-hearted Elsie Tanner, as promiscuous as her regular sparring partner Ena Sharples was puritanical.

In the first episode, in December 1960, Elsie was introduced by Ena as a woman of loose morals. At that time she was working at Miami Modes in the Slightly Better Dress Department. She later became a model, a croupier, a laundrette manager, a florist, a machinist, and a supervisor at Mike Baldwin's sweatshop. Her many lovers included Len Fairclough, Norman Lindley, Alan Howard and Bill Gregory, who in 1968 persuaded her to move with him to Portugal.

For most of the Sixties, we knew

Elsie was a scarlet woman but never quite how scarlet. In 1968, however, with the introduction of colour television, Britain discovered that she was a redhead. And her hair wasn't just red, but blazing red. For the colour stock, at first, was a little too vivid. The corner shop looked like Rainbowland. So Granada quickly slapped grey matt paint over the entire set.

Elsie, of course, had always been

colourful. And, like Bet Lynch after her, she became, to Tony Warren's immense satisfaction, a gay icon.

In due course the actor who played Elsie, Pat Phoenix, became almost as famous as her drier ego. Phoenix was born plain Patricia Pilkington, in Manchester; but she romanticised her past shamelessly, claiming to come from County Galway. Her role models were Bette Davis and Ginger Rogers, and she

played the part of a glamour queen to the hilt.

At the same time, she became inhabited by Elsie. In 1967, Jack Rosenthal produced the episode in which Elsie married Steve Tanner, an American army sergeant. When the time came to shoot the scene, word reached Rosenthal that Phoenix wouldn't come out of her dressing-room. He went to see what was wrong. "I can't go through with it," she said. Rosenthal explained that it was just another scene. "But you don't understand," she protested. "This is my wedding day."

By holding her hand and telling her she looked beautiful - in effect, by becoming the father of the bride - Rosenthal finally coaxed her down the aisle.

In 1981 the series producer, Bill Podmore, decided that the ageing Elsie should become less glamorous. Naturally, Pat Phoenix disagreed. So when Podmore had the writers invent a jealous wife to cut all Elsie's clothes to shreds, a device to get rid of her tight skirts and plunging necklines, the resourceful Phoenix made sure she was wearing her raunchiest outfit, and stayed in it for the next umpteen episodes.

Pat Phoenix died of cancer in 1986; by marrying the actor Tony Booth on her death bed (with a devoted Tony Tanner present as best man) she, albeit briefly, became Cherie Blair's stepmother.

Elsie, as far as anyone knows, is still haunting her elderly cleavage somewhere on the Algarve.



THE WEEKLY MUSE

BY MARTIN NEWELL



Early flowers the cherry-plum
To tell the lie that spring has come,
But shivers when the gale blows
As down the slope the blossom snows,
Across the street, caressing cars,
And sows the gutter pink with stars,
Which makes the local sage avow,
"It's staying lighter, darker now."

I wondered loudly as a clone
Went thundering down the bridgeway
On BMX, without a bell,
"How safe are country walks today?"
A flock of rambblers striding past
Replied to me, "They're pretty good.
It's taken only fifty years
But now we have the rights, we could
Go almost anyway we want
To get to anywhere we like.
The problem is, young Warren here
Can also get there on his bike."

Another Brit balloon comes down
And adds a tad to our renown
Who boldly go like Captain Kirk,
"To find new ways that do not work."

In genteel Berkshire - no, don't laugh -
They say they cannot get the staff,
The plumber, chippie and the spark,
To fix the bog, the door or dark.
Since Labour made us middle class
We can't repair a pane of glass
Or mend a U-bend on the sink.
It might be time to have a think
And train some of these kids of ours.
In laying bricks or fitting showers
Before new "Labour's" fine façade
Collapses in its own backyard.

What is that distant cheering sound?
Why are those bankers dancing round?
Herr Lafontaine - for it is he -
Clears out his desk, only to see
The euro, which was lately down,
Rise from its bed and mince to town,
An insult heaped on injury.
While Gerhard Schröder on TV
Swears blind he'll miss his finance chief
But can't disguise his own relief.

The other day I got the fare
To take a cab which wasn't there
To catch a non-existent train,
Which wasn't there today again
To meet the non-existent bus...
Is Prescott mad or is it us?

THE WEASEL

Amazement at the Tate's Jackson Pollock drip paintings gives way to dismay when confronted with Mrs W's monochrome leanings

STALKING THROUGH the Tate Gallery at the press launch of the Jackson Pollock show, Germaine Greer belatedly at an art hack: "I'm renewing my acquaintance with a very old friend." Speaking on Radio 3 that evening, the *grande dame* explained that the friend in question was a massive drip painting entitled *Blue Poles: Number 11, 1952*, which has been lent by the National Gallery of Australia.

As you may imagine, the work attracted a degree of pungent Aussie criticism when it was purchased for \$42m in 1972. I too was keen to see a particular Pollock, though in my case I was familiar with it only in reproduction. Another titanic example of his drip technique, *Convergence: Number 10, 1952*, occupied the cover of an influential Penguin anthology called *The New Poetry*, published in the mid-Sixties. In common, I'd guess, with many other Eng Lit students of my vintage, I became much more familiar with the colourful explosion on the cover than with the ground-breaking works by Robert Lowell, Ted Hughes, Sylvia Plath and Philip Larkin (who must have detested Pollock) that lurked unread within.

As it turned out, both Germaine and I were disappointed. "When I first saw the painting in Canberra, I was stunned by its glitter. It was like listening to jazz for the first time," she sighed on Radio 3. "But now it looks dim. It can't have been restored. Could it be me?" But I was even worse off. Though it appears in the catalogue, my painting never made it across the Atlantic. As with so many other areas of life (in-

come, food, homes...), we Limeys have to make do with a truncated version of the exhibition that wowed America.

But it is still a tremendous visual feast, beginning with Pollock's youthful struggle to forge his own style and concluding with a room of desperate, murky daubs before his death in 1956 at the age of 44. A desperate alcoholic, Pollock was notoriously belligerent, though rarely physically violent. He put himself about as a rugged *hombre*, a native son of Cody, Wyoming, though it may be pointed out that the artist left the town named after Buffalo Bill at the age of 18 months.

Most of the works are interesting, but at the heart of the show are a dozen of the most exciting canvases painted this century. His great drip paintings are surprisingly varied, ranging from shimmering veils of colour to scratchy calligraphy. One of the largest, it has to be said, is like a mouldy cheese, grotesquely magnified.

They irresistibly reminded me of jazz. Their improvisatory quality mirrors the bebop revolution that was taking place at the same time. The exploding trajectories of Pollock's paint are the physical equivalent of Charlie Parker's take-no-prisoners sax solos or Bud Powell's ferocious prowling of the keyboard. So it is unsurprising that the Museum of Modern Art in New York, where the show was first mounted, has issued a CD selected from Pollock's record collection. It turns out to contain such deeply angst-ridden waxings as "Lazy River" by

Louis Armstrong and "It Had to be You" by Artie Shaw.

Of course, there's no reason why the dominant artist of the atomic age had to be a lover of avant-garde jazz, but I wonder if this CD holds a key to Pollock's seismic discontent - that, beneath the raging exterior, he was a bit of a softy? It struck me at the Tate that Pollock's key works are often enjoyably



decorative, sometimes obviously so, as in the case of an 18-ft mural called *Summertime: Number 9A, 1948*. Unfortunately, "decorative" was just about the worst term of abuse you could apply to an artist in New York at the mid-point of this century. If Pollock had only been reconciled to this tendency, he could have lived a long and happy life on Long Island, renowned for the subtlety of his crochet work and the adventurous shape of his drop scones.

JACKSON POLLOCK isn't the only one who suffered traumas with paint. Our snail's pace struggle to refurbish Weasel Villas hit a snag last week when we came to tackle the dining-room. After infinite rumination, Mrs W decided on grey, exactly the same shade as before. The only trouble is, it's not longer being made. So, you may ask, why not buy another grey and slap it on? That's not the way we do things at Weasel Villas. What we do is scoot round to a local trade supplier and look at the grey offered by Sanderson & Co. According to the royal warrant, this is the company that supplies the wherewithal when the Queen decides to mount the step ladder and sash on the magnolia at Sandringham.

The only trouble is that Sanderson does not supply a single grey. More like 84. We took home 14 colour cards, each with six varieties of grey printed on them. Holding each against the wall, Mrs W squinted at the pigments like a jeweller assaying precious gems. She did not like Quaker grey. She did not like Quaker Maid ("too purplish"), Seacraft ("too greenish"), Eventide ("kind of fawn") or Kiltiwake Grey ("more like fawn"). Sky Grey was "too wispy-washy". Ant-dean Grey was "too murky", while Stormy Sky was, bless my soul, "too grey". She dismissed the transcendental (Cosmic Grey) along with the down-to-earth (Chimneysweep Grey), the poetic (Halation - it means the halo around a bright object on a photograph)

along with the uninspired (Steel Grey), the evanescent (Alpine Mist) along with the substantial (Bastille).

After I began to display the symptoms of a mild apoplexy, Mrs W finally plumped for Early Dawn and Smoke-screen. After purchasing the tins, she started dabbing away at the dining-room wall. But not, somewhat to my surprise, with one of the Sanderson paints. She was using a small sample pot of Dulux purchased before we had plunged into this agony of decision-making. More astoundingly, the colour emerging from Mrs W's brushes was not even grey, but a startling shade of green-blue called Fresh Aqua. Wow. It was not so much luminous as radioactive. "Whadyathink?" barked Madame. There was only one sensible reply: "Great." Sorry, Sanderson, you've still got Her Majesty.

MRS W has developed an inexplicable taste for something called "Just Juice". She glugs a variety called Cranberry and Redcurrant Crush by the Tetra Brik. Going by the ingredients, it should really be called "Just Sugary Water", because "Water" and "Succrose" come at the top of the list, with "Fruit Juices" not appearing until third place. However, the Trades Description Act has not been breached. On closer inspection, the words "Just Juice" are prefaced by "From the" (in small type) and succeeded by "Company" (in small type). I think I'll stick to my own tipples, which, to drop a hint, is Château Lynch-Bages '82. That really is Just Juice.

SPIRIT OF THE AGE

PAUL VALLELY

Some cringe-free evangelism

IT JUST goes to show how wrong you can be. Bring a square of cloth, 2ft by 2ft, cut from an old sheet, perhaps. And two felt-tipped pens. That's what the invitation said.

I have been to a conference organised by the Church of England to mark the end of its Decade of Evangelism. I have not just been reporting; I have been participating. Come and tell us what we have been doing wrong, they said, and then inside the conference agenda was the request for the old sheet. How could anyone ask what they were doing wrong in communicating with the people of the Nineties - and then ask you to bring an old sheet, I wondered. I noted with relief that there was to be a session entitled "Cringe-Free Evangelism".

There must be somewhere in the lexicon of British grammar a term for a word which produces an effect exactly the opposite of the one the speaker intends. If so I am sure that "evangelism" will feature in the examples. To most people it conjures up images of aggressive TV money-grubbers, ardent student leafletters or harum High-Street puritans with placards warning that "The End of the World is Nigh".

So it was something of a relief to find that there was not a tambourine to be seen at the conference in Swarwick, Derbyshire, this week. True, there was a bit of hand-waving during the hymns (something else which charismatic evangelicals never seem to

understand actually puts other people off). But there was in the air a sense that something big had to change - which Tom Butler, the Bishop of Southwark, captured with his opening joke about the ad in the *Church Times* which said: "For sale: Vicar wants to sell parrot whose doctrinal position he no longer shares".

But if the Church of England has to ditch prejudices, perhaps the rest of us do too. If the bit of old sheet sounded like a relic from the Church's Blue Peter days, the commentary which went with it hit the nail on the head. The radical message of Olive and John Drane, who run the centre for Christianity and Contemporary Society at the University of Stirling, was that to be taken seriously, modern-day Christians had to listen before they spoke. They had to find where God was already at work in the secular world before charging in, brandishing endless lists of scriptural quotations before them. Instead of trying to drag people into church, the need was to drag the Church to where people are.

Of course, it may be, George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, told the assembly that however much the Church changes, people would still not want to hear what it has to say. Prophetic statements against the oppressive abundance of our "two-car, two-holiday, two-video society" might not be well-received.

Even so, evangelism which was cringe-free would stand a better

chance of success. But cringing, I discovered, is very culturally specific. The session of that name was given by a bullish, silver-haired Yorkshireman called Ian Knox, who is an old-style evangelist in the style of Billy Graham. He offered tips on technique. It was like teaching a child French, he said, all you had to be was two pages ahead. And if you got stuck, turn to John 10 where you would find "everything you need to make someone a Christian in just 30 verses". The thing is to "use humour at the beginning to draw people to your side - but after the humour you go straight in with the lance," he advised in a metaphor which seemed singularly inappropriate, followed by a joke which had the virtue of being clean but the disadvantage of not being funny.

The contrast between the Drane and Knox approaches runs deep in the Anglican Church. That was evident by the session halfway through the week in which ordinary delegates got the chance to speak.

On the one side were the voices insisting that parishes are not the best way of running the Church since networks, not geography, now define the way people live. Why, after all this talk of change, said one woman vicar, was all the liturgy at the conference not in inclusive language, prompting several women to walk out. The Church of England is too top heavy, with no mechanism for the voice of the weak to be heard, said a vicar from Zambia. Yet in the same room, there were many



The Church is seeking to broaden its appeal

Tim Pulton

others still talking the language of entrapment. "You must catch the fish before you scale it," said one. "If we can capture the young people, we'll also drag in the little ones," said another. Marketing for many was evidently just a more subtle instrument of the missionary insensitivity of imperial days.

Metaphors of war, like images of death, belong to an old theology, preoccupied with accountability and blame, argued John Drane in a powerful new insight. A theology that was preoccupied with accountability and blame. What the Church needs is images of birth to prompt it to greater concern with potential.

"We often say that if we could only

get people into the Church, they would realise that what it has to offer is good news. But it is the people who know us best, from the inside, who are rejecting us," he said. "If we could merely hold onto our own children, who desert the Church in droves, the decline would be turned around."

His wife brought on stage a four-month-old baby whose mother was in the conference hall. "This is Naomi," began Olive, "she is a model of incarnational ministry." At the phrase, the baby yawned. Great idea, she seemed to say, but can't we come up with a better way of expressing it than that? It was the theme of the conference in a single phrase.

DAYS LIKE THESE

15 MARCH 1952

TOM DRIBERG (pictured), journalist and Labour MP writes in his diary:

"Norman Douglas is dead. It is startling to realise that a whole generation has grown up not knowing his *South Wind*, one of the half-dozen most important and sparkling novels of the century. Douglas may well turn out to have been one of the many writers who die poor but leave behind them books that bring in a steady income to heirs. In the latter years of his long life he discovered a new way of making money out of America's wealthier snob collectors of books and manuscripts. He found they would pay good prices for the original MSS of his earlier books, especially *South Wind*. So, whenever he needed cash, he would sit in his Capri villa for weeks on end copying out by hand a brand-new "original" MS. There are shocks in store for those collectors when they start comparing notes; I



don't know that we need be particularly sorry for them."

18 MARCH 1550

EDWARD VI, then 13, writes in his diary:

"The lady Mary (later Queen Mary) my sister came to me to Westminster, where after salutations she was called with my counsel into a chamber, where was declared how long I had suffered her [Roman Catholic] mass against my will in hope of her reconciliation, and how now, being no hope, I could not bear it. She answered that her soul was God's and her faith she would not change.

It was said I constrained not her faith, but willed her (not as a king to rule but) as a subject to obey. And that her example might breed much inconvenience."

19 MARCH 1599

DR SIMON FORMAN casts a horoscope for the Earl of Essex's expedition to Ulster:

"There seems to be in the end of his voyage negligence, treason, hunger, sickness and death. He shall not do much good to bring it to effect. At his return much treachery shall be wrought against him; the end will be evil to himself, for he shall be imprisoned or have great trouble. He shall find many enemies in his return and have great loss of goods and honour, much villainy and treason shall be wrought against him to the hazard of his life, because the moon goeth to Jupiter." [Essex returned from Ulster, failed in an attempted rebellion against Elizabeth I and was eventually executed in 1601.]

IAN IRVINE

A clear and present danger



CLASSIC PODIUM

From the speech given by Winston Churchill at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri in which he coined the phrase 'Iron Curtain' (5 MARCH 1946)

tylising tendencies. I have a strong admiration and regard for the valiant Russian people and for my wartime comrade, Marshal Stalin. There is deep sympathy and goodwill in Britain - and I doubt not here also - towards the peoples of all the Russias and a resolve to persevere through many differences and rebuffs in establishing lasting friendships. We

understand the Russian need to be secure on her western frontiers by the removal of all possibility of German aggression. We welcome Russia to her rightful place among the leading nations of the world. We welcome her flag upon the seas. Above all, we welcome constant, frequent and growing contacts between the Russian people and our own people on both sides of the Atlantic. It is my duty however, for I am sure you would wish me to state the facts as I see them to you, to place before you certain facts about the present position in Europe.

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject, in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very measure of control from Moscow. Athens alone is free to decide its future at an election under British, American and French observation. The Russian-dominated Polish government has been encouraged to make enormous and wrongful inroads upon Germany, and mass expulsions of millions of Germans on a scale grievous and

undreamed-of are now taking place. The Communist parties, which were very small in all these eastern states of Europe, have been raised to pre-eminence and power far beyond their numbers and are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control. Police governments are prevailing in nearly every case, and so far, except in Czechoslovakia, there is no true democracy.

The safety of the world requires a new unity in Europe, from which no nation should be permanently outcast. It is from the quarrels of the strong peoples in Europe that the world has been witness, or which occurred in former times, have sprung. Twice in our own lifetime we have seen the United States, against their wishes and their traditions, against arguments the force of which it is impossible not to comprehend, drawn by irresistible forces to these wars in time to secure the victory of the good cause, but only after frightful slaughter and devastation had occurred. Twice the United States has had to send several millions of its young men across the Atlantic to find the war; but now war can find any nation, wherever it may dwell between dusk and dawn. Surely we should work with conscious purpose for a grand pacification of Europe, within the structure of the United Nations and in accordance with its Charter?

Wi
arts

ON THE R

THE SATURDAY ESSAY

Will the sectarian war of arts and science ever end?



JONATHAN RÉE

When C P Snow put forward the idea of science as culture 40 years ago, he did it in the spirit of a peacemaker



CP Snow, right, pictured here with the writer Ronald Millar, thought the literary intelligentsia lacked the 'social hope' of scientists

WHEN CP SNOW gave his notorious lecture on "The Two Cultures" at Cambridge University in May 1959, he did not shrink from giving offence, but he tried to give it impartially. His topic was the division between the arts and the sciences, and he ridiculed not only the smug literary intellectuals with their bottomless ignorance about the Second Law of Thermodynamics, but also the dull, unimaginative scientists who thought it frightfully risky to "try a little Dickens". In Britain at least, the "two cultures" had settled into a state of cultural cold war, making complacent jokes about each other and exchanging ignorant insults. Both sides would suffer, Snow argued, and both were equally to blame.

The hostility between the arts and the sciences was not only culturally damaging, in Snow's argument, it was also politically ruinous. The educated elites of the West were squandering their energies on domestic cultural quarrels, while the poorest parts of the world were facing disease, hunger, poverty and social collapse, from which they could not escape without free access to Western-style technical education. If the battle of the two cultures were not ended soon, the real losers would be the poor of the Third World.

Snow's solution was reform of our education system: ending premature specialisation, raising the school leaving age, and improving the "social prestige" of teachers. The physical welfare of the poor was at stake, as was the cultural welfare of the rich. "Isn't it time we began?" Snow asked. "We have very little time - so little that I dare not guess at it."

"THE TWO CULTURES" was immediately published as a booklet, and widely discussed in the press and on radio and TV. At first everyone seemed to agree with Snow, and he grew glum about his popularity. "If you say anything which happens to touch a nerve like this," he said, "you can be absolutely certain that you have said nothing original."

But even Snow's supporters managed to misunderstand him. Bertrand Russell praised him for analysing the "separation between science and culture", for example, but Snow's argument was that science is itself a form of culture, and not a rival to it. Julian Symonds knew better, roundly denouncing Snow for presuming "that scientists have any culture at all".

Snow's most ferocious opponent was FR Leavis, the presiding genius of the Cambridge English school, who stalked for three years before delivering a condescending lecture on "The Significance of CP Snow" in February 1962. Leavis revered literature with the vehemence of a religious zealot; to him, Snow was not so much a colleague he could reason with, as a Satanic portent that had to be banished or conjured away. Snow was known not only as scientific adviser to the government but also as a best-selling novelist. To Leavis, however, he belonged to the most disgusting forms of journalism - the *New Statesman*, *The Guardian* and the Sunday papers. Snow was "blank in the face of literature," Leavis said, and "as a novelist he doesn't exist; he doesn't begin to exist." And his advocacy of educational and economic development in the Third World was proof of philistinism rather than humanity. In Leavis's opinion, Indian peasants and Bushmen, together with "poignantly surviving primitive peoples, with their marvellous art and skills and vital

intelligence", needed to be kept away from technical progress, and shielded from the emptiness of "modern society". Leavis's personalised tirade was published in *The Spectator*, once Snow had promised not to sue for libel. But while Leavis must have hurt Snow personally he scarcely touched his argument. Snow had already noted that scientists tended to be "on the left" - free of "paternalism" and "racial feeling", and glowing with "social hope" - while literary intellectuals, whose political attitudes "would have been thought slightly reactionary in the court of the early Plantagenets", preferred to muse about a mythical golden age of prehistoric times. Leavis's reaction confirmed Snow's diagnosis; he had driven the ball into his own goal.

THE GAP between the arts and the sciences has not disappeared in the four decades since Snow and Leavis gave their lectures, but the two sides have swapped cultural places. Then, it was the scientists who sniped enviously at the armour-plated privileges of the literary classes; now it is the other way round. Today's stereotypical leftist intellectual is not an optimistic scientific researcher, but a demoralised teacher of cultural studies; and today's typical scientist is not a cheeky outsider, but a powerful mandarin, cosseted by great corporations and courted by rich universities.

The transformation in the relations between the two cultures has been accompanied by the rise of a new arts discipline devoted to "science studies" or "cultural studies of science". Its origins can be traced partly to Snow's lecture, and to the plea for a historical perspective on the sciences in Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, published in 1962, the year of Leavis's attack. At first, most scientists gave science studies a cautious welcome. But when historians began to do what they do to science, they revealed activities that were far more disorderly, wilful, undemocratic and destructive than scientists liked to think.

Scientists grew wary about science studies, and in the Nineties, several prominent publicists turned against the idea that science is a form of culture, denouncing it with the same sectarian vehemence as Leavis; though for quite the opposite reasons. In books with crusading titles like

Higher Superstition: The Academic Left and its Quarrels with Science, *The Flight from Science and Reason*, *Intellectual Impostures* and *A House Built on Sand*, they argued not that culture transcends science, but that science - by discovering universal objective truths about nature - transcends culture.

Sectarian passions were inflamed. Richard Dawkins, for instance, spoke of "cardinal sins" against the canons of science, announcing that he would rather lay down his life than allow "fashionable prattlings" about "cultural construction" to prevail. The same quasi-religious fervour seized the philosopher Daniel Dennett, who attacks "fashionable literary theorists" by insisting that science, since it can be defined as "faith in truth", must therefore be the one true faith.

But those who say that science is nothing but the pure objective truth are guilty of desperate exaggeration. For one thing, they neglect the fact that a lot of science is not much good, and that even good science often stands in need of correction. They also presuppose that science as a whole must be as unified, universal and homogeneous as physics; in other words, they conveniently overlook botany, geology, linguistics, lexicography, epidemiology, criminology and hundreds of other sciences that are never going to sing along to the same simple tune. Worst of all, they argue that there are whole galaxies of truths that have nothing to do with science: the hard-won factual discoveries of critical historians, for example, not to mention the millions of items of factual knowledge that we all rely on to get through everyday life.

Dawkins, Dennett and other champions of scientific truth have clearly been terrified by something, and what frightens them is a spectre called relativism - that truths are essentially human inventions.

It may be that the idea of relativism as a threat to science is only a fragment of their imaginations. Some of us may hold that truths exist only in relation to human interests and criteria; but that does not make us indifferent to the distinction between truths and falsehoods. We accept, like everyone else, that the world has an unblatant natural order; we merely contend that truths about it depend on our various forms of description and understanding. We believe as strongly as anyone else in intellectual progress, in the sciences

and elsewhere. But we are suspicious of the idea that progress arises directly from the discovery of truths and the exposure of falsehoods; we are inclined to think, rather, that progress depends on making creative choices among the many available truths, and picking out those that are significant for the matters we have in hand.

We relativists will agree that, for many purposes, no truths are better than those of the sciences; but we will be bored by fundamentalist sermons about the sacredness of "truth" in the singular, or valiant declarations that it is the only thing worth living or dying for. And in the end, it may be our relativism, as opposed to the absolutism for which science is simple obedience to Nature's truth, which expresses the deepest respect for the complex creativity of scientific judgement. Painters do not have to postulate absolute entities called beauty or ugliness in order to make subtle distinctions between more or less successful paintings; nor do moralists have to believe in a monolithic rightness or goodness, as opposed to particular exercises of virtue or vice. And it might be a good day for science if scientists would take a leaf from the same humble book: if they stopped worrying about absolute truths, and learnt to live with those networks of particular truths that at least give us a little of what we want.

WHEN CP SNOW put forward the idea of sciences as culture just 40 years ago, he did it in the spirit of a peacemaker trying to end the war of the two cultures. His suggestion has now been furiously repudiated by both sides - first by Leavis in the name of literary fundamentalism, and then by absolutist defenders of science, and the battle has only intensified. Like other peacemakers, Snow may have been pouring his precious oil on to glowing embers rather than troubled waters.

The villain in the whole affair is probably the concept of culture. Back in the Sixties, FR Leavis thought of culture as a single all-embracing tradition of discriminating criticism, while Snow thought it had divided into two, though he hoped it would soon knit itself together again. But they both agreed in conceiving culture as essentially extroverted; it was our way of reaching out to others to share our understandings of the world and, with luck, improve them.

Since the Eighties, however, the idea of culture has grown sullen and introverted.

It has got caught up in the politics of group "identities", whether national, ethnic or religious. Every group is now supposed to be enclosed in the bubble of its own culture, internally unified and isolated from others. And each of us is expected to defend our group culture and keep it pure and intact, instead of trying to expand, transform, clarify and enrich it. The concept of culture which Snow famously popularised has become an alibi - or the kind of political paralysis that he most feared.

The microbiologist Meera Nanda recently described the fate of the People's Science Movement, in which up to 20,000 activists have been teaching basic science to the poor of India since the Sixties. Tragically, they have now started to encounter violent resistance from an alliance of Hindu true-believers and self-styled "cultural relativists", who hold that teaching science to Indians means depriving them of their cultural identity and even their "epistemological rights".

You do not have to be a fundamentalist to see that this kind of "cultural relativism" is pernicious and confused; but the flaw lies in its culturalism, not its relativism. If rights mean anything, after all, they belong to individuals, not to groups. They imply that individuals should be permitted to deviate from the norms of their group, not that groups should be able to compel their members to conform. And if people are going to commit themselves to the sciences, as so many poor Indians have done, it must be through their own convictions about the kinds of truth worth knowing, and not on the basis of the cultural traditions that prevail wherever they happen to have been born.

CP Snow would have been appalled at the fate of his idea of science as a kind of culture. In 1959, he saw little hope for the world unless every country in it was enabled to reach the same standards of scientific culture as Britain and America by 2009. It is now clear that his target is not going to be met, and his gloomiest forebodings may well come true. Perhaps it would have been better if he had kept the concept of culture out of it. In fact he originally planned to call his lecture "The Rich and the Poor" instead of "The Two Cultures". "And I rather wish," he once said, "that I hadn't changed my mind."

The writer's *I See a Voice* was published by HarperCollins (£19.99) in January

BAROMETER

SALLY CHATTERTON

Couple of the week?

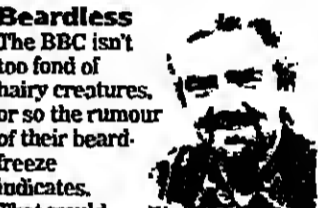


Of the trials and tribulations of the single, eligible man abroad. Poor Prince Charles on his trip to Argentina was snapped up by this voracious-looking tango dancer. It may be the dance of hot passion, but Charles looks as if he'd rather be anywhere else but in this masquerade creature's clutches. Keep those dance cards at the ready, girls.

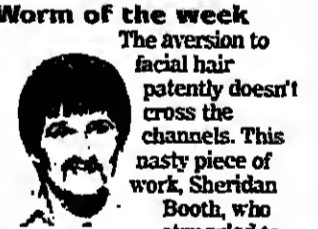
Couple of the week II?

The more gentle embrace of Bill and Hillary would seem to tell a different story. But the convivial felicity suggested in this picture is allegedly far from the truth this week. Sources have reported that Hillary can no longer stand to be in the same room as Bill, let alone on the same dance floor. No doubt the only pressing of the flesh between these two at the moment is when they come to blows.

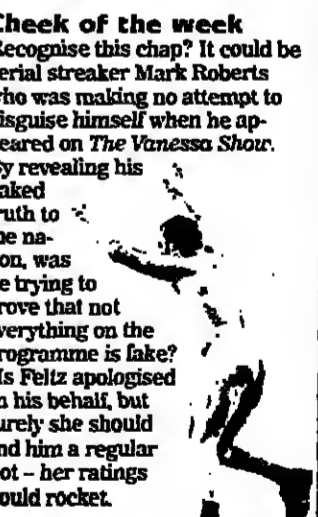
Beardless The BBC isn't too fond of hairy creatures, or so the rumour of their beard-free faces indicates. That would explain the elusive nature of comments upon the demise of Noel's House Party: when they said "we're moving on to something different" they meant something beardless. Where will this rampant beardism stop? First it was Noel, but now are the innocent but furry Teletubbies in line for the chop? Less likely, considering that the tubby (but hairy) oves charge less and are still netting Auntie millions.



Worm of the week The aversion to facial hair potentially doesn't cross the channels. This nasty piece of work, Sheridan Booth, who struggled to win himself £500 on ITV's *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, not only was allowed to parade on prime-time TV with this interesting-looking nematode on his lip, but also broke one of the show's rules: he is a criminal convicted of drug-dealing and animal abuse. Perhaps the facial hair was just a feeble attempt at disguise.



Check of the week Recognise this chap? It could be serial stalker Mark Robert who was making no attempt to disguise himself when he appeared on *The Vanessa Show*. By revealing his naked truth to the nation, was he trying to prove that not everything on the programme is fake? Ms Feltz apologised on his behalf, but surely she should find him a regular slot - her ratings would rocket.



MY WEEK

DERMOT MURNAGHAN, PRESENTER OF ITN'S 'NIGHTLY NEWS'



ITN's late-night anchorman

Sunday I am woken at 7am by the kids and go swimming with my daughter Killy. I plough through the mountain of Sunday papers noting the references to the demise of *News at Ten*, the coverage is fairly nostalgic. After the last programme on Friday, there were a few tears. It meant a huge amount to us at ITN, but to weep over a news programme is a bit much.

I have rehearsals all day. It's doubly complicated due to the Budget coverage. I get home and collapse at about 10. I go to bed and have one of those anxiety dreams about reading the news without any clothes on.

Monday Breakfast with kids. It's the usual

argy-bargy, finding books and shoes, and making sure that tights are on the right way round - not mine.

Get to work at 11 for an interview with LBC radio. More Budget rehearsals. The afternoon is spent interviewing a false Claire Rayner and dodging flying cameras. "Claire" is a male 19-year-old journalism student with a broad Geordie accent. He seems to like being called Claire but won't talk about anything other than football. It's impossible to replicate the real Budget journalistically, but it's good practice for the production crew.

I attend the launch of the *ITV Evening News*. The champagne is flowing but none touches my lips; if anything goes wrong tonight I don't want the slightest question-mark over alcohol being involved.

Tuesday The Budget looms. I must remember to ask the real Claire Rayner questions about the health service and not about Alan Shearer. I have to hang around for the two-way with Trevor McDonald on the main Budget measures. When the overnight figures arrive, everyone is pleased to find that the *Evening News* has beaten the BBC, the *Nightly News* has reached 3.5 million. We have the unknown slot, so are well pleased.

Wednesday I'm beginning to feel a little frayed around the edges, so I go for a walk on Hampstead Heath. It is nice to see some daylight after being locked away for hours in the dungeons of ITN. I get to the office at lunch time, glad to have the Budget out of the way so I can now focus on the *Nightly News*. The evening goes quickly because I have to do a one-minute bulletin at 10pm. We are all tired by day three and rush to leave, eager for our beds.

Thursday I do the school run in my pyjamas. I'm not worried about being recognised in a car full of seven-year-olds singing along to Robbie Williams. In defiance of John Prescott's ruling, I add to the traffic jams on Holloway

Road. I go back to sleep for a few hours before going to the gym. I need to get some blood pumping through my limbs. I arrive at the office to hear news about the ratings. This proves that people will stay up to watch the *Nightly News* if the programme before it is good enough.

Friday More school runs. Today it's The Corrs and the added accompaniment of squeaking red noses. My mornings are like most people's evenings. I usually just lie around and read the papers. It's like being unemployed, without the economic downside. Today I have to pay the bills and, of course, the parking tickets.

INTERVIEW BY DAISY PRICE



Peace in the wasteland

Famine and war have killed two million in Sudan. What can a tribal conference in the bush hope to achieve? By Steve Crawshaw

The tethered white bull, with its huge, gracefully curved horns, has an uneasy sense that this is no ordinary day. It paws the ground and tosses its head impatiently, as the beating of a plastic-canister drum and the singing of the crowds get insistently louder. Perhaps it has an inkling of its fate: this bull is doomed for a high cause. Villagers have gathered for a remarkable meeting in the hungry wasteland of south Sudan. They hope that the death of the bull will help bring an end to a long and deadly war.

The crowd presses forward to goad the animal, tweaking its tail or dancing just out of its angry range. The teasing ritual, in the middle of the hush in the Sudanese province of Bahr el Ghazal - the area worst hit by last year's famine - begins an hour after sunrise, and continues for a full two hours. "You die so that we can have peace!" shout the crowd.

A tribal chief, dressed in a safari suit with a gold-braided black hat, declares: "Anybody who fights again will go down like this bull." The spearman moves in for the final act. A knife across the throat; a spear into the open, spurting wound; cries of jubilation. A dull-red crescent of blood soaks into the dusty ground. The bull thrashes a few times more, and finally lies still.

This grisly Sudanese death in the morning was intended to serve a bigger purpose: to help people stay alive. The history of the conflict is horrific. Almost 2 million Sudanese are reckoned to have died in the south in recent years through a mixture of war and famine, usually ignored by the rest of the world. The famine that devastated the region last year, when 50,000 died in just a few months, briefly brought the international spotlight on to Sudan, especially Bahr el Ghazal. The famine was partly triggered - and its effects were immeasurably worsened - by the almost invisible war. The Sudanese hope that if the death of the bull serves its intended purpose, then perhaps these will not be dying fields in years to come.

The ritual slaughter was intended to create good omens for the extraordinary peace talks that took place between the two main tribes of southern Sudan, the Dinka and the Nuer. The peace meeting, brokered by the New Sudanese Council of Churches, went almost unreported: no press conferences, no international news agencies, no camera crews. This month's week-long conference in remote south-west Sudan could, however, have important implications for the region.

The general secretary of the New Sudanese Council of Churches, Haroun Ruon, describes this as "a rare chance" and "an historic event". Certainly, the delegates are taking it seriously. Many walked for days to get to the meeting, in a region where vehicles are scarce or non-existent. Others were flown in on planes specially chartered by the Council of Churches, landing on a nearby airstrip (ie, an open and more or less flat piece of ground), then travelling by lorry or on foot to their destination.



An entire purpose-built village - a south Sudanese Milton Keynes, as it were - has been erected. Dozens of brand-new huts, the traditional round huts of the region, are scattered between the trees. In the conference hall - a loag, low mud building, thatched with elephant grass - long boughs are laid in line for use as delegates' benches.

In many respects, this is very different from any other peace conference. Dress code is seriously mixed. Some are in ancient suit and tie; some are in traditional garb; many outfits are eclectic combinations - baseball cap and ceremonial fly-whisk, bishop's purple shirt and trainers, T-shirt ("Futureworld: Niagara's largest indoor entertainment centre") and robes.

Applause is usually in the form of musical interludes, of which there is

no shortage. People regularly get to their feet and sing. After a minute or five, everybody sits down again, and the proceedings resume as though nothing had happened.

The proceedings are polite: when one side disagrees, there are rarely any interruptions, just a murmuring of discontent - followed by a retort that afternoon or the next day. Oh, for the Stormont talks on Northern Ireland, or the Kosovo talks at Rambouillet, to have been so civilised.

If the peace agreement sticks, the implications could be considerable. Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development, courted controversy when she was sceptical about last year's Sudan famine appeal: she argued that the buck stops with local politicians who worsen the famine, not least by refusing to allow aid convoys through. Aid

agencies working in the south retorted that starving people need emergency aid, whatever the immediate causes of their hunger may be. None the less, few dissent from her core point: that politics and war are at the root of the evil. If politics can be forced to compromise, then much else will follow.

Peace between Nuer and Dinka seemed an impossible challenge. Relations have become increasingly bitter. Traditionally, it was just a matter of the occasional cattle raid, with few casualties. But things got much worse in the past few years. As one Dinka puts it: "We used to attack each other with spears. Now, there are automatic rifles. That's a big change." It has literally been a case of rape, pillage and slaughter. Both sides believe that the other side has committed terrible crimes. Every-

body has a story of bloodshed to tell - of how people from the other side came to steal and kill, before fleeing into the darkness.

Not everybody is pleased that the conference, which was partly sponsored by Christian Aid, came to fruition. The Sudanese government has instituted an effective system of divide and kill, to prevent the (black, animist-Christian) south from making headway in its 15-year war against the (Arab, Islamic) north. The Khartoum regime therefore needs a Nuer-Dinka peace deal like a hole in the proverbial head.

Even those who seem to have most reason to be keen on reconciliation have sometimes been less than enthusiastic. The southern rebel force, the Dinka-dominated Sudanese People's Liberation Army, holds huge swaths of territory

across the south. An end to Nuer-Dinka fighting could theoretically make life easier for the SPLA and its leader John Garang ("Dr John", as he is universally known) in their struggle with Khartoum.

SPLA leaders appeared to shower warm words on the conference. The movement's senior field commander, Salva Kiir, complete with Castro-style rebel's beard, stands declaiming about reconciliation between Nuer and Dinka. "Let us beat the drums of peace." Eight bullets gleam on his gun holster; his bodyguards clutch Kalashnikovs; outside the doorway, a young soldier squats behind a sub-machine gun. The SPLA talks peace, but is obsessed with war.

Despite the proclaimed enthusiasm of Kiir and others, SPLA leaders are not keen on the conference

- because they are not in control of the process. The pressure came largely from the grassroots and local churches, not from national leaders such as Garang and his Nuer counterpart, Riek Machar. As one of the chants at the bull-slaughtering declared: "They [Machar and Garang] cannot decide anything. We are more powerful than they. They cannot lay down the law."

It is as if Gerry Adams and David Trimble were banned from taking part in anything except the opening session of the Stormont peace talks, before handing the floor over to local community leaders. In other words, a remarkable set-up. Salva Kiir used his speech to launch what amounted to a recruiting drive for the SPLA, while praising "your show". Not everyone was impressed. Deborah Nyadieu, a small bundle of energy in a neat blue dress, retorted that women no longer want to give birth to babies who would be sent out to die.

"We want to ask the men: why have our children been dying? Have any men died pregnant? Have you experienced the pain of labour? You are not so clever, you must take what we are saying seriously. Otherwise, next time we'll make a revolution. We'll stop having intercourse with you. We are not the women of the past." Laughter, singing, applause.

Even if the south-south agreement holds, Sudan's wider problems are far from over. Despite an alleged ceasefire, government forces continue to attack the south. A hospital in the town of Yel, for example, was severely damaged by Sudanese government bombing raids this month.

Some believe that a weakened Khartoum government could agree to a referendum on secession within the next two years; that option is more on the cards than ever before. Already, south Sudan is in a separate limbo of its own. Whatever happens next, the participants in the peace conference are proud of what they have already achieved. Henry Chuir, a Sudanese bishop recently released from a Khartoum jail, believes southern peace might also lead to a northern settlement. "If the south says 'We don't want war, we want peace' then the north will say 'They are united; it's better that we let them go'."

The slaughtered bull may mark the achievement of a peace from below. In that sense, this was indeed a historic moment. But politicians and professional soldiers have not yet had their say. A generation in southern Sudan has grown up knowing nothing but war. They see it stretching out for years to come.

Ask Salva Kiir about the prospects for long-term peace and about attempts to set up civilian structures in the desolation that is SPLA-controlled southern Sudan, and he is almost tongue-tied. By contrast, when asked about the prospects of further war, the commander waxes lyrical. "We're prepared to take the struggle on for a hundred years." The international community, whose involvement in the peace process is stalled, does not seem much bothered either way.

Perhaps somebody should go and slaughter a few more bulls.



Top, the Nuer gather and tell stories at the Nuer-Dinka peace conference in southern Sudan; above, building the conference village from mud and elephant grass; left, a man arrives on foot at the village at sunrise; below left, a bull is wrestled to the ground to be sacrificed at the start of the talks; below right, a young Dinka boy attends a church service during the conference

Photographs: Tom Pilsten



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Lord Menuhin

YEHUDI MENUHIN was a child prodigy who became the most famous violinist of his time. Later in life he also became a conductor, a musical educator, and a public figure with a passionate desire to combat the injustices and inhumanities he observed in a much-travelled career.

His early celebrity and uninterrupted progress made him better known than other concert violinists who were often more reliable performers and better practical musicians, such as Jascha Heifetz, Isaac Stern and David Oistrakh. But Menuhin was much more than a practising musician and the variety of his activities made him the subject of much public interest and brought forth books, films, serious studies and journalistic comment, which came as much from outside the musical world as from within it.

He was born in New York in 1916 of Russian Jewish parents who moved to San Francisco when he was a small child. They devoted themselves to the musical education of their son and his two younger sisters from an early age and gave them the kind of intense training that is associated with the Bach, Mozart and Beethoven families.

Yehudi in particular was the golden boy for whom no sacrifice was too great and for whom an expensive violin was purchased and the best teachers employed. Louis Persinger, who had himself once been a pupil of Eugene Ysaÿe, became his teacher when he was five years old and accompanied his early recitals.

Yehudi made his debut as soloist with an orchestra at the age of seven. He was sent to Europe to study with Adolf Busch and then with Georges Enesco, the teacher who had the greatest influence on him.

In 1929 at the age of 13, after a long coast-to-coast American tour, he was heard by Henry Goldman, a prominent New York philanthropist and patron of the arts, in the Tchaikovsky concerto at Carnegie Hall. Goldman was so impressed that he bought Menuhin a Stradivarius violin, the only one then on the market. The instrument was played by him on his subsequent European tour and at his Berlin debut.

Menuhin was encouraged to develop a large repertoire of established violin works and new compositions, and this frequently included music not well known outside its own country or even within it. His parents, Moshe and Marutha Menuhin, travelled with him and taught him those subjects he had missed in school - he only went to a normal school for a single day - and it was said that he was not allowed to cross the road alone until he was 18.

He met all the great conductors of his time, played under most of them, and performed a considerable number of works written for him by composers who wished to be associated with his celebrity and knew that he had the ability to make their work better known. At 16 he met Sir Edward Elgar and performed his violin concerto with the composer conducting; the work was recorded and is frequently reissued. Elgar, who was 78 at the time, spoke highly of the young prodigy.

Menuhin became associated in the public mind with the popular repertoire and in particular with the Mendelssohn concerto, for which he seemed to have a special feeling; he recorded it many times. He later played the Bartók concerto and called it the major 20th-century violin work of his kind; as was the solo sonata Bartók wrote for him in 1944. Among other modern works he performed in the Forties were the Alban Berg concerto and the Schoenberg Fantasy for Violin and Piano.

Busch played a large part in the Menuhin repertoire and the double violin concerto and the Vivaldi triple, the latter less frequently played, gave him the opportunity to perform with many other violinists including Stern, Jacques Thibaud, Nathan Milstein and Mischa Elman. He recorded the concert of Beethoven, Brahms, Bruch, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Mozart and Tchaikovsky many times, along with works by William Walton, Paul Ben-Haim, Enesco, Heitor Pizzetti and Ernest Bloch, and many other composers.

He was open to other forms of music and other cultures. In later years he played jazz with Stéphane Grappelli, although he never achieved Grappelli's improvisational sense of rhythm, and studied and played with Indian musicians such as Ravi Shankar. On occasion he played the viola in such works as Ravel's *Harold in Italy* symphony.

His long career as a violinist had good and bad patches. He seemed unaware of this, at least in public; the great charm and relaxed manner that he brought to his playing was more appealing to the average audience than the often dry perfection of other violinists. He was not a violinist's violinist, and the respect of his musical colleagues was as much due to his erudition and public good works as to his performing skills. He took criticism badly and was easily hurt, probably as a result of his over-protected and indulged childhood.

His mother, Marutha, was the strongest influence in his life until

the time of his second marriage. She not only controlled and disciplined every moment of his childhood and teenage years, but chose his first wife, Nola Nicholas, an Australian heiress whom he married in 1938 and, after several unhappy years, divorced. His second marriage, to Diana Gould, an English ballet dancer, was idyllically happy. He had two children by each marriage: Jeremy, his son by the second, is now an established pianist.

Yehudi and his two sisters could be said to have missed their childhood in furthering their parents' ambitions, but only Yaltah, the youngest (a pianist), publicly complained. Hephzibah had a distinguished career as a concert pianist, playing frequently with her brother until her death in 1981.

He worried constantly about the state of the world, the wars and conflicts created by national, ideological and racial differences, the plight of refugees and the victims of aggression. He also worried about the increasing pollution created by the greed, stupidity and indifference of business interests and governments. He played frequently in Israel, and as a Jew felt deeply for the problems of that country, siding with the doves and using his influence to try to further a harmonious ending of the Jewish-Arab conflict. Menuhin had a special feeling for Russia, where he performed from the beginning of his career.

He had a deep respect for countries that preserved a civilised life style in a disciplined society such as Switzerland and a loathing for regimes where human rights are non-existent. While admiring the achievements of capitalism, and the vitality of the United States, he deplored its destructiveness, and while recognising the ideals of Communism, he realised that in practice it nearly always choked initiative and real progress. Menuhin was a cosmopolitan liberal with a realistic understanding of the darker side of human nature, but he never lost hope that mankind might come to its senses before it was too late.

Perhaps his most enduring legacy is the Menuhin School of Music, founded in 1963 at Stoke d'Abernon in Surrey, which for the most part has been a school for talented young string players. It provides a rounded musical education and has turned out some excellent musicians, but so far no world-class talent. It has been traditional in its teaching methods, concentrating mainly on Russian and French techniques, eschewing new systems that get quick results but are often suspect to professional musicians.

Menuhin adopted British nationality in 1965, 20 years after being appointed honorary KBE. In his long career he picked up many honours and honorary appointments. He appeared in many films and television programmes, had others made about him, directed festivals, wrote books and had others written about him. His autobiography *Unfinished Journey* appeared in 1977.

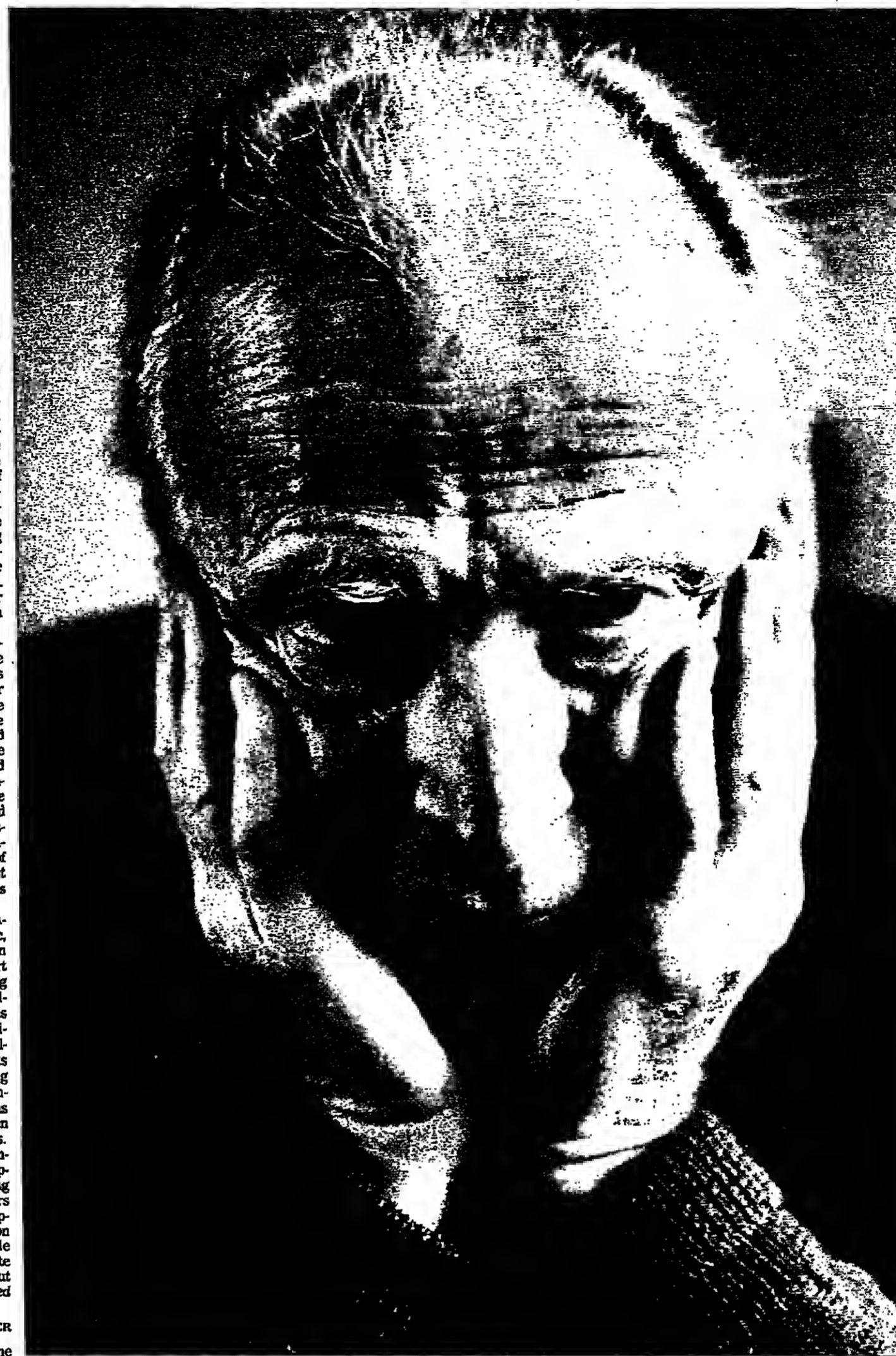
JOHN CALDER

"They listen more intently if one doesn't shout."

Yehudi Menuhin's observation - made apropos an orchestral rehearsal he was conducting - could have applied equally well to his way with the whole of life, writes Robert Ponsbury. No musician can have been listened to so intently or raised his voice so little. For 70 years he was an international personality worth listening to well beyond the sphere of music, a voice all the more eloquent because of its essential innocence. He once said of Elgar's music that it was "never crude, never aggressive, never vulgar", and that was true of Menuhin himself.

As his career unfolded he was listened to in different ways. At first, he was simply the breath-takingly gifted child prodigy; then, as he matured, the master violinist. With the Second World War he became a tireless public servant, giving innumerable concerts for Allied troops, often in hazardous conditions. With peace, he emerged as a legendary figure. In world-wide demand. At the same time he began to be known for his boundless curiosity, not only within music but also about man's responsibility both for his own body and to the planet he inhabits. He took to conducting and, though by no means a "born" conductor, he was listened to because of the conceptual integrity of his interpretations. Later he acquired a status verging upon sainthood, such was the idealism of his views. There were those who mocked him for his fads - "his yoga and his yoghurt" - but they missed the point.

By his own account, Menuhin's parents - both of them teachers of Hebrew - took him to a concert by the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra when he was two and he begged for a violin for his fourth birthday. At the same time, he asked for lessons with Louis Persinger, leader of the orchestra. Initially, Persinger was unresponsive, so the boy went to another teacher, whose sole instruction into the technique of vibrato was to shout, "Vibrate! Vibrate!" In due course Persinger relented.



Yehudi Menuhin: "The greatest man in the profession"

David Rose

However, "He demonstrated and I imitated. . . . Never having taught me a method, Persinger allowed me to beget my own." Vibrato came to him at the age of six or seven - but it remained a problem and he relearned it as an adult. At eight he had prepared the Mendelssohn Concerto, the Tchaikovsky concertos by de Beriot, Spohr and Lalo, and the Bach Sonata in G Minor. He longed to play the Beethoven and, to "earn" it he learned the Mozart A major in eight hours. Persinger was furious and his father "laid a strap" to him. At about the same time he first heard Enesco and conceived a passionate desire to study with him, so, in 1928, when Menuhin was 10, the family sailed to Europe. Before setting in Paris to work with Enesco, he went to Brussels to play to Ysaÿe. The audition was instructive. Having listened to the first movement of the Lalo *Symphonie Espagnole*, recording of Elgar's Concerto (though Elgar himself defended the interpretation with the memorable comment, "Austerly be damned! I am not an austere man, am I?"). The collaboration between the 16-year-old Russian-American Jew and the 75-year-old Roman Catholic Englishman was entirely happy but, curiously, accounts of the run-through which preceded the concert differ sharply. Popular legend has it that Menuhin and Ivor Newton had barely reached the soloist's second entry when Elgar declared himself satisfied and announced that he was off to the races. Newton's more circumstantial account is to be preferred: "We played right through the concerto except the tutti. . . . Menuhin and Elgar discussed the music like equals but with great courtesy. . . . on the boy's part. Most of the time Elgar sat. . . with his eyes closed, listening intently."

Busch's fastidiousness irksome: "While Busch developed in me a sense of discipline, precision and authority. . . . it was Enesco who fired my imagination." Meanwhile, more recordings had been made, initially with Persinger at the piano. Mainly trifles, they included a Mozart concerto movement, which is very elegant. More important is the first recording with orchestra - Bruch's First Concerto, with London Ronald and the LSO. This has all of Menuhin's virtues at the time - freshness, a loving concern for the music and complete technical assurance.

A year later, in June 1932, came the famous Bach Double Concerto, with Enesco playing second and Pierre Monteux conducting, a collaboration wildly unfashionable by purist standards but nevertheless unarguably convincing and, in the slow movement, very moving. Between 1929 and 1936 all the unaccompanied Bach Sonatas and Partitas were recorded, while, with his sister, Hephzibah, Menuhin recorded Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms and Enesco sonatas. Just before the war came the Franck and Pizzetti sonatas, also with Hephzibah, and the Schumann Concerto with Bartoli (who remarked upon his "very Jewish talent") and the New York Philharmonic. All in all, Menuhin never played more immaculately than in his late teens and early twenties.

Who can tell what effect his experiences during the war may have had upon him? He had married in 1938 (unsuccessfully as it later proved) and when Pearl Harbor was attacked in December 1941 he was 25. Over the next four years he gave over 500 recitals for Allied forces in the Americas, in the Pacific theatre and in Europe. The stresses of this, the anguish of playing to troops who might shortly lose their lives in battle, combined with separation from his children and discord with his wife, must surely have disturbed him fundamentally. He went through a period of personal dejection, tension and fatigue. His playing - based upon inspired facility rather than a rock-firm technique - self-evidently suffered and the critics began to comment upon his unpredictable standards.

In private, he embarked upon a thorough-going review of his technical resources. This, together with three unrelated but in different ways inspiring events, brought him back to a point at which he was again capable of the superlative performances which had come to him before the war. Indeed, he sometimes surpassed those earlier standards: he was, after all, a more deeply experienced and mature artist.

Menuhin had met Bartók for the first time in November 1943, and Bartók had remarked of his performance of the Second Concerto, "I did not think music could be played like that until long after the composer was dead." Impulsively, Menuhin asked him for a work for violin alone and, in March 1944, the Sonata was ready. Menuhin was shaken; it seemed "unplayable". But after some minor technical adjustments he performed it at Carnegie Hall in November the same year.

Bartók, who had less than a year to live, was overjoyed and the two men developed a deep friendship. Two months before Bartók's death (from leukaemia) Menuhin met Benjamin Britten in London and the latter urged him to take him on tour in Europe, where recitals for war victims had been arranged. Gerald

Moore generously withdrew and so it was that the two eminent figures played at Belsen - twice in one afternoon - to those who had survived the horrors of that most vile of concentration camps.

It was for both a deeply haunting experience. Coming to terms with it, Menuhin was consoled by the self-evidently healing power of music. He was perhaps also fortified by the growing warmth of his feelings for the dancer Diana Gould - and hers for him. In any case he married that remarkable character in 1947 and, despite the prickly but humorous badinage to which she not uncommonly subjected him, there is no doubt they lived happily ever after.

Bartók, Britten and Belsen, his marriage to Diana - these restored Menuhin to his former interpretative glory, while his controversial support of Wilhelm Furtwängler, a public declaration of very great courage, led him to some of his finest achievements - the Brahms, Mendelssohn, Beethoven and Bartók Second concertos, all recorded with Furtwängler between 1949 and 1953. It is clear that the two men had a profound spiritual and emotional affinity, and the Beethoven - as Menuhin himself would have wished - is probably the best thing he ever did.

His sheer range is easily forgotten. At the Edinburgh Festival of 1968 he played the Mozart G major concerto, the Brahms Double (with Cassidy) and the Shostakovich First, with his brother-in-law, Louis Kentner; the Mozart Sonata in A, K526, the Beethoven in G op.96 (a magical performance) and the César Franck; and, with Cassidy and Kentner, trios by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Brahms and Ravel. (The Beethoven and Mendelssohn they took to a suburban cinema. The recital - for local people who were charged a shilling - was a sensation.) Bloch, Enesco, Bartók, Martin, Walton and Panufnik wrote works for him. His repertoire included music by Berg, Chausson, Delius, Nielsen, Sibelius, Debussy, Fauré, Poulenc and Vaughan Williams, much of it idiomatically and lovingly performed.

It is not clear when Menuhin began to conduct. Robert Magidoff's biography has a photograph of him conducting, apparently in 1944. But it seems likely that he did not take up the baton regularly until he established the Gstaad Festival in 1956. In Britain, as artistic director of the Bath Festival between 1959 and 1968, he developed the Bath Festival Orchestra (later the Menuhin Festival Orchestra) and made a number of recordings - notably Bach's Brandenburg Concertos and the four Suites, performances which have more than stood the test of time. In 1967 he recorded Mozart's *The Seraglio*, a notoriously difficult piece to bring off. In due course he began to play less and to conduct more.

By the late 1980s he had formal appointments with the Royal Philharmonic, the Warsaw Sinfonia and the English String Orchestra. He was appearing with the Berlin Philharmonic and the English Chamber Orchestra. And his repertoire was steadily growing, sometimes in unexpected directions. In 1990 he undertook Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* and though the performance lacked the dramatic spirit of the work was realised. A recording of Beethoven's Choral Symphony made the same year was more successful. Mozart's G minor Symphony, recorded with his Polish forces a little earlier, was rated the best of innumerable versions by at least one critic.

The truth is that Menuhin had little natural aptitude as a conductor. His bowing wrist could not adapt to the need for daring flexibility; his elbow seemed the last flexible joint in his arm. As a consequence what he did looked laboured. Players unfamiliar with his method found him hard to follow, but those who knew him well learned to interpret his wishes by that mysterious form of communication - which exists between instrumentalist and conductor. In any case, there can be no doubt that because of his innate musicality and his imaginative grasp he was sometimes able to convey the essence of a piece of music at least as successfully as some of his technically better-equipped colleagues.

Menuhin was both a polymath and a perfectionist - but one who sometimes fell short of perfection. Compare him, as a violinist, with Heifetz or Hændel, and, as a conductor, with Toscanini or Kleiber, and his uneven technical standards are easily perceived. But for sheer generosity of spirit, for the range and infectiousness of his enthusiasms and for the profound nobility of his finest achievements he was nonpareil. As Adrian Boult (writing in the early 1970s) put it: "It is impossible not to feel that Yehudi Menuhin is now the greatest man in the profession." And that he remained until his death.

Yehudi Menuhin, violinist and conductor, born New York 22 April 1916; KBE 1965; OM 1987; created 1983 Baron Menuhin; married 1938 Nola Nicholas (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1947); 1947 Diana Gould (two sons); died Berlin 13 March 1999.

Menuhin was a polymath and a perfectionist - if one who sometimes fell short of perfection. But for sheer generosity of spirit, for the range of his enthusiasms and the profound nobility of his finest achievements he was nonpareil

Ysaÿe asked for an A major arpeggio in four octaves. Menuhin "groped all over the fingerboard" (his own words) and Ysaÿe remarked, "You would do well, Yehudi, to practise scales and arpeggios." Enesco, whom the family followed to Romania in 1927, had similar advice: Menuhin, he believed, should study as well with Adolf Busch, pre-eminent among German "classical" violinists and a teacher who would be likely to counteract his tendency to over-expressiveness, what Menuhin himself later described as his "too passionate playing". This too passionate element is apparent in parts of the wonderful first

The Elgar recording was made in 1932. Meanwhile, Menuhin had had a phenomenal success in New York, playing - at last - the Beethoven with Fritz Busch who, until the boy had auditioned for him, had scornfully dismissed the possibility with the remark, "Man lässt ja auch Jackie Coogan nicht den Hamlet spielen." ("One wouldn't let Jackie Coogan play Hamlet!") A comparable success followed in Berlin, where he played the Bach E major, the Beethoven and the Brahms with Bruno Walter. He was not quite 13. He now took lessons with Adolf Busch and though he accepted the need for classical rigour he found

tween 1929 and 1936 all the unaccompanied Bach Sonatas and Partitas were recorded, while, with his sister, Hephzibah, Menuhin recorded Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms and Enesco sonatas. Just before the war came the Franck and Pizzetti sonatas, also with Hephzibah, and the Schumann Concerto with Bartoli (who remarked upon his "very Jewish talent") and the New York Philharmonic. All in all, Menuhin never played more immaculately than in his late teens and early twenties.

Eric Wolf

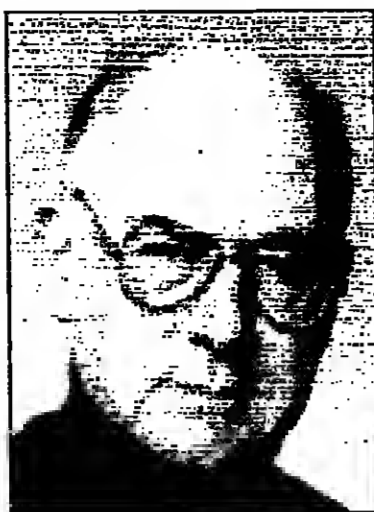
ERIC WOLF was an anthropologist, but not, he insisted, a theorist. "My primary interest," he said, "is to explain something out there that impinges upon me, and I would sell my soul to the Devil if I thought it would help." He avoided abstract debates and was never dogmatic. Nevertheless, he remained faithful to a conception of anthropology "that is not content merely to translate, interpret, or play with a kaleidoscope of cultural fragments, but that seeks explanations for cultural phenomena." And he was sure that any satisfactory explanation must grant central importance to material forces, as these operated historically.

Wolf always claimed that his background made him an anthropologist. Born into an assimilated Viennese Jewish family in 1923, a regular visitor to his mother's family home in Manchuria, he grew up in a cosmopolitan world.

When his father moved the family to Sweden in 1933 to run a factory, they found themselves on the Czech-German language frontier, a hotbed of competing nationalisms and anti-Semitic agitation. "My chief fascination was for the extreme differences that made up my own social universe," he told an interviewer, "alien forms of life that belonged to the same society, carried the same passports, and interacted in a larger national context."

The most alien of these forms of life were the peasant villages of the region, but "these were all differences that were close to home," and he later specialised in the study of peasant societies. "So-called primitive or tribal societies never held the same interest for me because they seemed so totally alien to my own life."

His father foresaw the coming crisis and sent Eric to school in England, to the Forest School in Walthamstow, an experience he enjoyed. With the out-



Wolf: a 'neo-evolutionist'

American anthropology was divided in the 1950s. The established culturalist tradition was challenged by a group of radical ex-servicemen that formed around the "neo-evolutionists". Leslie White and Julian Steward. Eric Wolf became a notable figure in this circle, and although he remained open to other approaches he was drawn into the rivalry between these schools.

Tensions were exacerbated during the Vietnam War. Wolf was active in the anti-war movement, and published several influential studies of peasant revolutions. He was never an orthodox Marxist, however, perhaps because he had so keen a sense of the variety of situations that had been created by Western intrusion into what came to be called the Third World.

This historical confrontation was the subject of his masterpiece, *Europe and the People without History* (1982). He had taken sabbatical leave in London in 1974 to write the book, but when he began to assemble his materials in the School of Oriental and African Studies library he discovered to his chagrin that there were few monographs on which he could draw. He was forced to undertake much of the primary research from scratch, opening up fresh areas of historical research in the process.

His final project was a comparative study of the modes of power in different societies, essentially an attempt to discover an explanation for the Third Reich. It is no exaggeration to say that his whole life experience, and his whole research effort, was ultimately shaped by the need to understand this historical catastrophe.

He joined the faculty of the City University of New York in 1971, and for almost three decades taught undergraduates at Lehman College in the Bronx and graduate students at the Graduate Center.

These were not prestigious venues, and his eminent colleagues at better endowed institutions tended to escape from undergraduate teaching at the first opportunity, but Wolf was a dedicated teacher. He developed special courses in culture and personality theory ("my bread and butter"), an intellectual tradition that he thought students should master although it had no obvious connections to historical materialism, or indeed to his own immediate research interests, and which had become unfashionable in American anthropology departments.

A man of wide culture and generous sympathies, Eric Wolf was completely without pomposity or self-importance, and engaged with students and younger colleagues without ever patronising them. Towards the end of his life he became one of the most revered elders of the European Association of Social Anthropologists, faithfully attending their conference together with his wife, Sydel Silverman, and accepting with a certain ironic pleasure the honours bestowed on him in Prague, Vienna and Frankfurt, while remarking on his good fortune that his family had left these places just in time.

ADAM KUPER

Eric Robert Wolf, anthropologist; born Vienna 1 February 1923; Assistant Professor, University of Illinois 1952-55; Assistant Professor, University of Virginia 1955-58; Assistant Professor, University of Chicago 1959-61; Professor, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor 1961-71; Distinguished Professor, Herbert H. Lehman College and Graduate Center, City University of New York 1971-92 (Emeritus); married 1943 Kathleen Bakeman (two sons; marriage dissolved); 1972 Sydel Silverman (two stepdaughters); died Irvington, New York 7 March 1999.

Peggy Cass

THE GRAVEL-VOICED character actress Peggy Cass won a Tony award for her portrayal of Miss Gooch, the adonoid, frumpy secretary who in taking her flamboyant employer's advice to "live a little" becomes an unmarried mother in the hit comedy *Auntie Mame* (1957).

When she recreated her hilarious performance in the film version of the play she received an Oscar nomination, and though she appeared in other plays, several films, and enjoyed a prolific career as a panellist on television quiz shows, it is for the role of Gooch that she will be most fondly remembered.

Born in Boston in 1924, she attended the Cambridge Latin School, spending three years in their drama club without winning a single speaking role. Determined to become an actress, she moved to New York, where she worked as a typist, telephone operator and model while studying acting with Uta Hagen and Mira Rosova. Her first professional work in the theatre came when she was cast in a USO production of *The Doughgirls* which toured the South Pacific during the closing days of the Second World War in 1945. In 1947 she understudied Jan Sterling as Billie Dawn in the touring production of *Born Yesterday*, taking over the role in Chicago, and the following year she made her Broadway debut succeeding Ann Thomas as Maise in *Burlesque*.

The producer George Abbott then cast her in his revue *Touch and Go* (1949) and other roles included a season of Shakespeare at the New York City

Center (including Bianca in *Othello* and Mistress Quickly in *Henry IV Part 2*) before she was given the part with which she would become identified. "I was in Dallas doing another show when my agent called me and said I had to come to New York to read for *Auntie Mame*," she recalled.

I was hell-bent to go to California to be in movies, but he wanted me to read for the part of the Irish maid, Nora Muldoon. After I read for the part, they just said "Thank you" but as I was about to leave there was a buzz from the audience and Rosalind Russell, who was to star in the show, said, "Let her read for the understudy of Gooch." I expected to read with the stage manager, which had been the procedure, but Russell herself came on stage to read with me.

The star suggested they read Act 2, Scene 6 in which Mame transforms Gooch from a mousy secretary into a sophisticated society woman. Pointing to Gooch's shoes, she asks, "What do you call those things?" Gooch replies, "Orthopaedic Oxford's", to which Mame responds, "Kick 'em off!" Cass kicked so high that the shoes flew into the wings. Russell exclaimed, "That's my Gooch!" "So I got the part," said Cass. "I always felt a little guilty because another actress had been told that she had it. But, after I read, they didn't sign her contract."

The play was a smash hit and a personal triumph for Russell but Cass later commented on the star's generosity.

Rosalind never once tried to tone me down. She was always trying to build me up. She said that by the time I came on, which was the beginning of the second act, the audience



Cass: 'That's my Gooch,' said Rosalind Russell. Ronald Grant

had seen so much of her, she had carried so much of the show, that they were damn glad to see me. They say that some stars cut you down and reduce your part if you get too much attention. I never had that experience with Roz. She was absolutely out for the good of the play.

Cass was one of three supporting players in the show who went to Hollywood to recreate their parts in the 1958 film version. She had earlier made her screen debut playing Al Ray's sister in George Cukor's *The Marrying Kind* (1952). Later films included *If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium* (1969) and a charming low-budget Irish comedy, *Paddy* (1970), in which she played an

American tourist in Dublin who has an affair with one of the locals (Mia O'Shea).

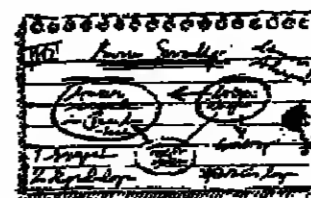
Other stage roles included the role of the meddling telephonist Ella in *Bells Are Ringing* (in Dallas), the revue *A Thorough Cornucopia* (1960) on Broadway and the comedy *Once in Catholic* (1978). She appeared in several productions of the popular musical *Nonsense*, playing the salty Mother Superior.

But her major career after *Auntie Mame* was to be on television, where her brash repartee and encyclopaedic mind made her a staple of panel games and quiz shows - at one point she was appearing as often as seven times a week, and she was a regular panellist for over 10 years on the show *To Tell The Truth*, in which the panel are confronted by two plausible impostors and one truth-teller, all offering the same implausible story. "I'm an actress," Cass told one interviewer. "I've studied drama, literature, life! But, since I went on *The Jack Paar Show*, they just let me talk."

Last September Cass reprised her role of Agnes Gooch in a one-performance benefit reading of *Auntie Mame* in New York with the drag performer Charles Busch as Mame. Cass received an ovation for her performance, one of the audience commenting afterwards, "It was as if time had stood still."

TOM VALLANCE

Mary Margaret Cass, actress; born Boston, Massachusetts 21 May 1924; married first Carl Fischer, second Eugene Feeney; died New York 8 March 1999.



PSYCHOLOGICAL NOTES

STEVEN PINKER

The Stone Age mental toolbox we inherit

THE HUMAN brain is an extraordinary organ. It has allowed us to walk on the moon, to discover the roots of matter and life, and to play chess almost as well as a computer. But this virtuosity raises a puzzle. The brain of *Homo sapiens* achieved its modern form and size between 50,000 and 100,000 years ago, well before the invention of agriculture, civilisations and writing in the last 10,000 years. Our foraging ancestors had no occasions to do astrophysics or play chess, and natural selection would not have rewarded them with more babies if they had. How, then, did our outside, science-ready brain evolve?

This puzzle has frustrated our attempts to understand the mind as part of the natural world. But the puzzle can be solved with a key idea: the process of natural selection equipped our ancestors with a mental toolbox of intuitive theories about the world, which they used to master rocks, tools, plants, animals, and one another. We use the same toolbox today to handle the intellectual challenges of modern societies, including the most abstract concepts of science and mathematics.

Humans evolved mental machinery that allowed us to co-operate with and outsmart the local flora and fauna. Vital to that machinery - what makes it so powerful and essential to foragers and neuroscientists alike - is its ability to analyse the world into useful categories. The

world is a heterogeneous place. To generalise from our experiences properly and make good predictions about events unseen, we need to understand something of the causal structure of the world - its contents and the laws that make it tick. Thanks to our ancestors' mental toolbox, we seem to be endowed with several kinds of intuitions that do just that.

And this brings us to how Stone Age minds grasp modern science. Formal sciences grew out of their intuitive counterparts. The conviction that living things have an essence, for example, is what impelled the first professional biologists to try to understand the nature of plants and animals by cutting them open and putting bits of them under a microscope. Anyone who announced he was trying to understand the nature of chairs by hinging them into a laboratory and putting bits of them under a scope would be dismissed as mad, not given a grant.

But modern science forces us to make some changes in our thinking, including turning off parts of the intuitions out of which it grew. Newton's first law states that a moving object continues in a straight line unless acted on by a force. Ask college students what happens to a whirling tetherball that is cut loose, however, and a depressingly large minority say it would continue in a circular path. The students explain that the object acquires a "force" or "momentum" that powers it along the curve until the

momentum gets "used up" and the path straightens out. Although erroneous, the students' beliefs are completely understandable since we evolved in a world with substantial friction that makes moving objects slow down and stop.

Modern science also pries our intuitive faculties loose from the objects they usually apply to and aims them at seemingly inappropriate ones. To do mathematics, we invent abstract concepts to present themselves to our mind's eyes as reassuringly familiar shapes. To do chemistry, we stretch our intuitive physics and treat the essence of a natural substance as a collection of tiny, bouncy, sticky objects. To do biology, we take our way of understanding artefacts and apply it to living things - organs as machines "engineered" by natural selection - and then to their essences, the molecule of life. To do psychology, we treat the mind as an organ of a living creature, as an artefact designed by natural selection, and as a collection of physical objects, neurons.

According to a saying, if you give a boy a hammer, the whole world becomes a nail. If you give a species an elementary grasp of psychology, biology, and mechanics, then for better and worse, the whole world becomes a society, a zoo, and a machine.

Adapted from Steven Pinker's *How the Mind Works* (Penguin, £9.99)

God our Mother is not a trendy affectation

ALMOST FOUR decades have passed since the great debate amongst Protestants about whether God should be addressed by the personal pronoun "You" as opposed to the old style of "Thee" and "Thou". The chief grounds for retaining the old language were that the more modern address approached God in a manner that was "too familiar and lacking in reverence". The argument never held much water inasmuch as Jesus himself had shocked the religious establishment of the time by addressing God in as familiar way as one could by using the word "Abba", which translates as "Daddy". What is more, in the Lord's Prayer, he clearly encouraged his followers to adopt the same familiarity.

The debate about "Thee and Thou" was not unimportant because it was saying something about the nature of God and the belief in the intimacy and the familiarity of our relationship to that God. The language with which we address God is, in a sense, both credal and formative of our beliefs. It is right, therefore, that care should be taken in the language we choose, because what we believe about the nature of God can have a profound effect on our values and behaviour. If we believe in a punitive or vengeful God, then it is but a short step to acting punitively or vengefully in his name. Much of the shameful part of the history of the Church has sprung from the prevailing understanding of the nature of God. Would men have ever embarked upon the Crusades if their overriding image of God had been of a mother caring for her young?

I was once asked by a ward sister to speak to a woman who was desperately ill. There was no hope for her and the ward sister said that she needed the release of death but was hanging on to life in fear of dying. She had attended church all her life and yet she was terrified of meeting God in death. Perhaps if she had heard God regularly addressed as "God

our Mother" the story might have been different.

If the debate about "Thee and Thou" has long been resolved there is now another which parallels it. What now seems to be causing concern to some Christians is the idea that we can address God as "Our Mother". The issue has surfaced in the response in certain quarters to the Methodist Church's new liturgy book, the first substantial revision for 24 years, which comes into use on Easter Day and which will authorise for the first time

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Bruce Deakin is a Methodist minister in Haydock, Merseyside

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

RICHARDSON: On 8 March 1999, to Sally (nee Forest) and David, a daughter, Amy Alexandra, a sister for Natasha.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. TOMORROW: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 10am: 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Coldstream Guards.

Announcements for BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, in memoriam) are charged at £8.50 a line (VAT extra).

BIRTHDAYS

TODAY: Baroness Amos, former chief executive, Equal Opportunities Commission, 45; Mr Walter Annenberg, former US ambassador to Britain, 91; Lord Borrie QC, former Director General of Fair Trading, 68; Mr Terence Brady, playwright, novelist and actor, 60; Sir Terence Burns, Permanent Secretary, HM Treasury, 55; Lord Butterworth, former Vice-Chancellor, Warwick University, 81; Sir Michael Checkland, former Director General of the BBC, 63; Miss Lesley Collier, ballerina, 52; Mr Lionel Friend, musical director, Nexus Opera, 54; Sir Graham Hart, Permanent Secretary, Department of Health, 55; Sir Robert Mark, former Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, 82; Mr James Marshall MP, 58; Sir Henry Neville, former Lord-Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, 79; Dr David Peace, glass engraver and town planner, 84; Air Commodore Helen Reston, former Director, WRAF, 68; Mr Neil Sedaka, songwriter and

singer, 60; Mr Jim Slater, writer and former chairman, Slater Walker Securities, 70; Lord Thomas of Gresford QC, a Recorder of the Crown Court, 62; Mr Peter Viggers MP, 61.

TOMORROW: Prince Albert of Monaco, 41; Sir Kenneth Alexander, former Principal, Stirling University, 77; Miss Pam Ayres, poet, 52; Professor Sir Michael Berry, physicist, 58; Mr Ian Bruce MP, 52; Mr Michael Caine, actor, 66; Mr Jasper Carrott, comedian, 54; Professor Sir Colin Dollery, former Dean, Royal Postgraduate Medical School, 68; Mr Alan Elliott, former Chief Constable, Cumbria, 57; Lt-Gen Sir Peter Graham, former GOC, Scotland, 62; Sir Philip Holland, former MR 82; Mr Quincy Jones, composer, arranger, conductor and trumpeter, 66; Sir Gavin Laird, chairman, Greater Manchester Buses North, 66; Air Chief Marshal Sir Douglas Lowe, 77; Mr John McCallum, actor and producer, 81; Lord Marsh, former Chairman, Newspaper Publishers' Association,

71; Sir Eric Norris, former diplomat, 61; Mr Bill Owen, actor, 84; Sir Richard Parsons, former ambassador to Sweden, 71; Dame Betty Paterson, former chairman, North West Thames Health Authority, 63; General Paul Rader, General of the Salvation Army, 66; Miss Tessa Sanderson, javelin thrower, 43; Mr William Sillery, Headmaster, Belfast Royal Academy, 58; Mr Anthony Smith, President, Magdalen College, Oxford, 61; Miss Rita Tushingham, actress, 57; Sir Nicholas Wall, High Court judge, 54.

ANNIVERSARIES

TODAY: Births: Dr Joseph Priestley, scientist and clergyman, 1733; Sir Hugh Seymour Walpole, novelist, 1884; George Seferis (Giorgos Stylianos Seferiades), poet and diplomat, 1900. Deaths: Stephen Vincent Benet, novelist and poet, 1943; Angela Brazil, girls' school-story writer, 1947; John Middleton Murry, author, 1957. On this day, as predicted by Halley in 1682,

Halley's Comet came to its perihelion, 1758; the Soviet Congress voted to abolish the political monopoly of the Communist Party, 1990. Today is the Feast Day of St Ansovinus, St Euphrasia or Euphrasia, St Gerald of Mayo, St Heldrad, St Mochoemec, St Nicophorus of Constantinople and Saints Roderic and Salomon.

TOMORROW: Births: Mrs Isabella Mary Beeton (Mayson), author of household and cookery books, 1838; Albert Einstein, physicist, 1879; James Laver, writer and editor, 1889. Deaths: Admiral John Byng, executed for neglect of duty 1757; Karl Marx, political philosopher, 1883; Busby Berkeley (William Berkeley Berkeley), choreographer, 1976. On this day, the first production of *The Mikado*, by Gilbert and Sullivan, was staged, 1885; the New English Bible (New Testament) was published, 1961. Tomorrow is Mothering Sunday and the Feast Day of St Euthychius or Eustathius of Carthage, St Leobinus or Lubin and St Matilda.

On the road to nowhere

Fifty years after Jack Kerouac coined the term, the Beats are more hip than ever. Pity they were wrong about jazz, black people, women and pretty much everything. By Alex Webb

For a movement that was all about the "now," the Beats have had a pretty good run. It is 50 years since Jack Kerouac found a publisher for his first novel, *The Town and the City*, and coined the term the Beat Generation, but interest in Kerouac and the Beats has never been higher. In the past few years the Beats have been celebrated by the novelist Toby Litt and in the Welsh film *House of America*. When Francis Ford Coppola held an open casting call in New York for his intended film of *On the Road*, more than 5,000 people queued all day for it.

We can expect the Beat industry to move into overdrive this year, the 30th since Kerouac's death. His *On the Road* is the central text of the Beats, a jumble of car journeys, joints and jazz that had already skipped a musical generation by the time of its publication in 1957. It has continued alikidding down the generations ever since, moving further and further from the context in which it was conceived. Reading it as a Home Counties teenager in the punk/disco era was captivating – which teenager would not prefer the ecstatic wonder of the Beats to the scepticism and sourness of the British alternative. Larkin and Amis Sr? But divorced from its roots in modern jazz and repressive Forties America, *On the Road* has become a simplified statement of youth rebellion for its own sake, a celebration of the institutionalised adolescence that has been such an intimidating force in Western culture since the Fifties. In this, Kerouac has probably suffered as much at the hands of his friends as at those of his enemies; in any case, some reassessment is long overdue.

Fortunately for its reputation, *On the Road* is not a book many people read twice. Supposedly written in three weeks – and it feels like it – it now comes over as repetitive and baggy. Everyone seems to be sweating and shouting all the

time: "sad", interestingly, is a term of approbation.

But there are more serious problems with it. There is the appalling treatment of women, none of whom is ever allowed a single intelligent thought. "There's a real woman for you," Kerouac has his hero, Dean Moriarty, say at one point in the book. "Never a harsh word, never a complaint - her old man can come in any hour of the night with anybody and have talks in the kitchen and drink the beer and leave any old time."

He is not being ironic. When Dean and the narrator Sal Paradise take their pleasure at a Mexican whorehouse, they show no glimmer of discomfort or imaginative sympathy; that Mexican girls must sell themselves is held to be the natural order of things.

In this solipsistic world black people are treated mainly as a source of fantasy. In a famous passage, Sal Paradise speaks of "wisting I were a Negro, feeling that the best the white world had offered me was not enough ecstasy for me, not enough life, joy, kicks, darkness, music, not enough night." This sensibility – common enough still among white suburban youths who have been told that their lives are rootless and shallow – formed the basis of Norman Mailer's ponderous 1957 essay *The White Negro*, in-

1931 essay *The Negro Problem*, inspired by the Best example. "In the worst of perversion, promiscuity, pimping, drug addiction, rape, razor-shall bottle-break, what-have-you, Mailer opined, "the Negro discovered and elaborated a morality of the bottom..." This in the year that courageous black schoolchildren were forcing America to live up to its own ideals by desegregating schools in Little Rock, the year that Duke Ellington recorded his *Shakespeare Suite Such Sweet Thunder* and Miles Davis the score for Louis Malle's film *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud*. But to Mailer and the Beats, jazz could only be about wildness and abandon - "Jazz is orgasm," Mailer observed.

This misunderstanding of jazz is one of the central problems of the

Beats. In *On the Road*, Kerouac's characters travel all over America enthusing about jazz to find its apotheosis in, of all people, the entertainer Slim Gaillard. Gaillard was a fine musician, but he played his whole act for laughs. The real musical father of the Beats was the saxophonist Charlie "Bird" Parker, who almost single-handedly invented modern jazz — bebop — in the



Kerouac's failure to understand Charlie Parker's music is very revealing

mid-Forties. Kerouac's failure to understand Parker's music is revealing. Parker's music, for all its extroversion, speed and sense of freedom, was intensely disciplined, the product of a kind of single-minded musical study almost unprecedented in jazz at that time. Parker's weakness for drugs and high-rolling should not obscure the serious musician within.

But bebop inspired in Kerouac and the Beats the mistake that white intellectuals have continued to make many times since - the assumption that other cultures must be more spontaneous, more intuitive, more soulful than their own: a sophisticated version of the "natural rhythm" fable. Charlie Parker's

own attitude to the Beats can probably be gauged from a story told by Ted Joans, about a party where a Beat poet had proposed reading an "Ode to a Piece of Vaccinated Bread". Joans reports: "Bird interrupted, 'Stop right there. We are all brothers and sisters. This man here is going to tell us about this piece of bread that has been vaccinated. Now, you know there's no idiots in the house; and, if you want hear these poems you can... but if you are like me, we will continue the party'."

Of course, the Beats' misunderstanding proved highly saleable. "As it turned out," says the music historian Martha Bayles, "the Beat sensibility was a lot easier to popularize than bebop. Certainly, the flyweight nihilism of Beat poetry proved more appealing to the average movie-goer than the daunting complexity of a Charlie Parker solo."

Kerouac's subsequent books, *The Subterraneans*, *Dharma Bums* and *Doctor Sax*, were really more of the same. More revealing – unintentionally so – was 1960's *The Lonesome Traveler*, a kind of *On the Road* goes to Europe. No longer pioneering descriptions of coast-to-coast car journeys and the Beat underground, Kerouac pitched himself against London and Paris, where European readers could compare his impressions with reality – indeed, compare his writing with the great literature of those cities. In this context, Kerouac's superfluity and naïveté are startling.

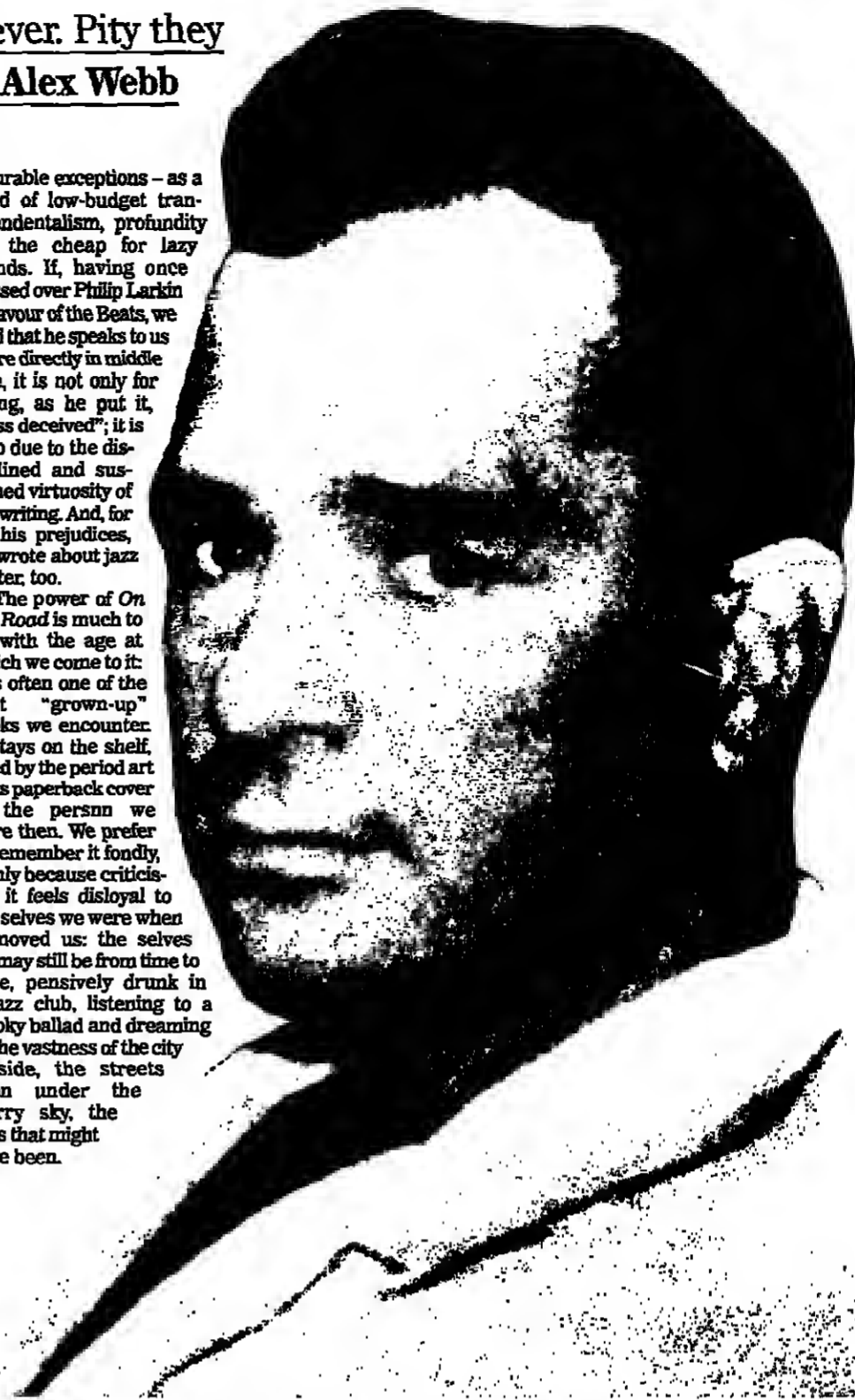
In the Sixties he descended into alcoholism. There is a late report of him drunkenly haranguing the great saxophonist John Coltrane in New York's Village Vanguard for "not liking jazz". In any case, by the mid-Sixties the Beals' message had found a new home in the hippie counterculture, which was even less likely to get to grips with the music of Charlie Parker and his followers. Kerouac died, a few days after a hearing in a bar on 21 October 1969

Kerouac and the Beats were widely held to be the expression of atomic-age angst. We can now see their writing and poetry - with ho-

nourable exceptions – as a kind of low-budget transcendentalism, profundity on the cheap for lazy minds. If, having once passed over Philip Larkin in favour of the Beats, we find that he speaks to us more directly in middle age, it is not only for being, as he put it, “less deceived”; it is also due to the disciplined and sustained virtuosity of his writing. And, for all his prejudices, he wrote about jazz better, too.

The power of *On the Road* is much to do with the age at which we came to it: it is often one of the first "grown-up" books we encounter. It stays on the shelf, fixed by the period art of its paperback cover to the person we were then. We prefer to remember it fondly, if only because criticizing it feels disloyal to the selves we were when it moved inside ourselves. It may still be from time to time, enviously drunk in a jazz club, listening to a smoky ballad and dreaming of the vastness of the city outside, the streets open under the starry sky, the lives that might have been.

Keronac in certain cont



Kerouac: in certain contexts his superficiality and naivety are startling

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THE WEEK IN REVIEW

BY FIONA STURGES

<div> <div>EXCELLENT</div> <div>GOOD</div> <div>OK</div> <div>POOR</div> <div>DEADLY</div> </div>				
OVERVIEW	CRITICAL VIEW		OUR VIEW	ON VIEW
THE FILM PLEASANTVILLE  <p>Gary Ross's directorial debut sees a pair of teenagers (Reese Witherspoon and Tobey Maguire) transported to a wholesome black-and-white 1950s sitcom.</p>	<p>"A technical marvel, enlivened by a smart script, great visual jokes and a handful of fantastic performances... But," wrote Anthony Quinn, "its thinking is confused and faintly patronising." "Technically superb, but dazed and confused," decided the <i>Daily Mail</i>, while the <i>Financial Times</i> deemed it "Pleasant but predictable." "An imaginative,</p>		<p>Ross's feature debut is a technical masterpiece and makes a playful spoof of American family values, though its moral standpoint is occasionally confused and condescending.</p>	<p><i>Pleasantville</i> is out on general release, certificate 15. 124 minutes</p>
THE PLAY SPEER  <p>The Austrian actor Klaus Brandauer directs and stars in Esther Vilas's biographical study of Albert Speer, Hitler's architect and minister for war.</p>	<p>"The strength of <i>Speer</i> lies in the scrupulous, magnetic performances. Both actors are supremely relaxed," noted Paul Taylor. "Skillfully directed by Brandauer, <i>Speer</i> remains a compelling drama about one of the most enigmatic figures in 20th-century history," intoned <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>. "Both the author and Brandauer</p>		<p>The controlled formality of Sven Eric Bechtolt's <i>Bauer</i> is more than matched by Brandauer, whose eerily meticulous <i>Speer</i> almost single-handedly carries the play.</p>	<p><i>Speer</i> is at the Almeida Theatre, London N1 until 27 March. For bookings and enquiries call 0171-359 4404</p>
THE ALBUM BLUR  <p>Essex mockery Damon Albarn bemoans the demise of his relationship with Elastica's Justine Frischmann in Blur's sixth album, <i>13</i>, featuring the hit single 'Tender'.</p>	<p>"Blur's sixth album is a grower," declared Andy Gill. "On first hearing it sounds rough and unfocused, but with each subsequent encounter its character becomes more clearly defined." "How is Noel Gallagher going to top this?" inquired <i>The Guardian</i>, adding, "This album shows Blur to be more inventive, artistic and daring than their</p>		<p>Albarn may have been unlucky in love, but his loss is our gain. With <i>13</i>, Blur have transcended their Britpop status and come up with their most inventive and courageous album to date.</p>	<p>Blur's <i>13</i> (Food) will be available in record shops on Monday</p>
THE EXHIBITION JACKSON POLLOCK  <p>The Tate Gallery hosts a retrospective of the US Abstract Expressionist artist Jackson Pollock - aka, "Jack the Dripper" after his famous "drip" paintings.</p>	<p>"It offers inexhaustible interest to the eye. It can be contemplated endlessly. And if you're content for that to be what painting does, you can hardly ask for more," considered Tom Lubbock. "A thrilling experience," sang <i>The Spectator</i>. "Pollock appears embroiled in a life-or-death struggle to convey his urgent vision of the</p>		<p>Following the trajectory of Pollock's career is an extraordinary spectacle which explodes before your very eyes as he abandons the paint brush in favour of the "drip" paintings.</p>	<p>Jackson Pollock is at the Tate Gallery until 6 June. For bookings and enquiries call 0171-887 8000</p>
THE TV PROGRAMME TREVOR MCDONALD  <p>Having bid an emotional farewell to the flag-bag <i>News at Ten</i>, Trevor McDonald introduces ITV's re-branded news programmes at 6.30pm and later at 11pm.</p>	<p>"The innovations consisted of a new, more spacious look to the studio, and rotating computer graphics, with the kind of rotating globe that the satirical TV programme <i>The Day Today</i> poked fun at," reported Robert Hanks, adding, "Apart from that it was business as usual." "Those waiting for the rot to set in will, I'm afraid,</p>		<p>Apart from a few cosmetic improvements and the extraordinary sight of Trevor McDonald walking around, the new programme is indistinguishable from the last.</p>	<p>You can watch the ITN Early Evening News at 6.30pm and the ITN Nightly News at 11pm. Both programmes are on Monday to Friday</p>

EXIT POLL

VISUAL ARTS
JACKSON POLLOCK
TATE GALLERY, LONDON

JACK COLLINS
24, retired, Plymouth
"It is so different from anything I have seen before. I loved the idea of it being uniform as well as abstract; it looks like a pattern that you could never copy. There is such tremendous detail in these paintings, and the sheer amount of work is very impressive. He also used a complicated combination of colours."

PATRICK KIRBY
21, student, South London
"I loved it. I thought his work was particularly good towards the end of his life, during what he called his 'black period', when he left splatter art. I enjoyed seeing his experimentation with uncontrolled imagery which was a big theme for him, and I thought that these works took him to a new level. A great artist should never be locked into a style that he has created."

RUTH BROWN
14, student, Dorset
"It's very different from what I usually think of as art. It's simple, playful and unorganised. I didn't really understand the names he gave the paintings, because I saw different things in the pictures. His compositions are crazy. I would recommend it."

GEORGINA ANDERSON
70, actor, London
"I thought it was absolutely superb. I could get lost in his paintings. The exhibition mentions Pollock's excellent response when someone once asked him why he didn't paint landscapes - he said: 'I am the landscape.' I think this is very true. When you look at his paintings you feel as if part of him is right in there. I also found it interesting to learn about his struggle to create, and to communicate."

A careful ripple of a storm

RICHARD ALSTON is a choreographer's choreographer. He creates a plotless fabric of dance, with consummately crafted movement that dips and weaves on the energy of the music and sections the air with bold curves and lines. His facility is like an engine, chugging out an inexhaustible variety of images. Yet within this enormous range, the contrasts and modulations are understated, filtered through the stylisation of his language. An emotional storm for Richard Alston is, for me, a careful ripple.

Slow Airs Almost All of Them is his new piece for the Richard Alston Dance Company Using Mozart's Six Adagios and Fugues for String Trio (played by the group string factory on stage), he considers the adagios to be the heart of the music. These allow him to deploy his predilection for...

DANCE

RICHARD ALSTON
DANCE COMPANY
QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL
SOUTH BANK CENTRE
LONDON

entirely lyrical duets, and the final one even. "His smooth manipulation of slotting shapes, closing with a duplicate pose of one body identically folded over the other. But Alston's writing to the fugues (which Mozart derived from Bach) also has a graphic freshness, so that when he brings on the cast's four women he shows them as a tight, unexpected frieze, their backs turned to the audience. Cleverly he choreographs overlaps, causing the dance to continue in the

silences between the musical passages. The surprise effect of this jolts you into seeing the movement even more acutely. The musical delight of live players and fingers continues with the rest of the programme. Alston's 1994 *Mopements from Petruska* takes Stravinsky's piano arrangement of his original ballet score and, for the first time in London, puts the piano centre stage. Richard Casey's 10 fingers are enough to cope, the dancers circle round him and Christopher Tudor leaps and rolls, an echo of Fokine's tragic puppet. But what really makes the piece? The music or the movement? The performing style, too soft-edged for the jagged rhythms, weakens the choreography's impact. The dancers' deliberately gentle outlines, avoiding muscular tension,

look right in last year's *Waltzes in Dis-order*, to Brahms's song cycle, *Liebeslieder-Walzer*. Christopher Tudor breaks away from his relationship with a woman for the freedom symbolised by Martin Lawrence's man-bird. The threading-through of a theme helps the piece avoid the sense of proximity which can sometimes blight Alston's pieces. Watching an Alston programme I find myself redoubling my admiration for him, but as the evening progresses he offers me diminishing returns. Perhaps it is because he articulates his choreographic contrasts with such restraint, perhaps because the pacing is so smooth and language so tastefully beautiful. I know I am watching different things, but it all tends to feel the same.

NADINE MEISNER



Alston's 'Slow Airs Almost All of Them' offers diminishing returns

So good they named it twice

THE "FOREIGN" film screening on Wednesday night was not a broad Italian comedy, or a nasty French farce. It was *The Acid House*, based on Irvine Welsh's short stories of Scottish lowlife, replete with American subtitles. "Sleg" was still "sleg" in this American-speaking translation. But "watching *Coronation Street*" read as "watching TV", and "wee bird" appeared on the screen as "girlfriend". *The Acid House* opened the Sixth Annual New York Underground Film Festival, and before the screening ended, Manhattanites in the darkened theatre could be heard repeating the film's phrases after reading them.

"You stoopid slag," said one fellow in a booming New York accent. "You daft sow!" replied his friend. True to its name, the Under-

ground Festival is larded with postulant 16mm shorts (*Bite My Bookends*), wacky documentaries (portrait of an obese champion hot-dog eater), and videos such as 10 Beers in 10 Minutes (promoted as Andy Warhol meets *Animal House*). *The Acid House* was the slickest, attended by the festival's usual ageing youth-cultured crowd, in regulation black and, of course, with grey circles beneath the eyes. These cineastes, primed for four days of films that range from under-edited to unedited, might probably have suffered. *The Acid House* untransliterated. Other US audiences probably won't be as willing, though.

"It would be impossible to release it without subtitles," says Emily Russo, of the film's American distributor, Zeitgeist Films. "There's

NEW YORK DIARY



ALISSA QUART

a lot of slang in it that was translated into American slang. Honestly, I didn't know what 'saw' and 'bairn' meant without the translation. And the film uses a lot of strong objectionable language - the subtitles really puts that

language out there." Artisan Entertainment, the distributor of Ken Loach's *My Name Is Joe*, took a similar tack, translating that film's supposedly intractable Glaswegian dialogue for US viewers. Loach's 1990 film *Riff-Raff* was also subtitled. US critics had said the film was of a "genre that's hard on American ears" and harder to listen to than reading French subtitles. *The New York Times* went so far as to thank Artisan for subtitles that broke the "bar-and-brogue barrier". According to Bing Wong, marketing director of CPV, a New-York-based dubbing and dubbing company, his company has also subtitled Irish TV and industrial videos for Americans "because the accented speech can be fast and the phrases are unclear". Despite these claims of the inde-

pherality of the kitchen sink - an inverse of America's passion for *Shakespeare in Love*'s voices - ordinary New York viewers of *My Name Is Joe* didn't need to need the titles. After *The Acid House*, the festival's audience headed out of the theatre into a cold, clear evening, and perhaps a late-night festival party at the Irvine-Welsh-appropriate East Village pharmacy theme bar, Bar-macy. They carried festival programmes that urged them to forgo the "mollycoddling shopping-mall mentality" of independent film. "See you in Hell!" the notes exclaimed. "I was happy for those subtitles," said one festival-goer. "Oh, I didn't really need them," said another. "But I had read the book."

"Never trust anything called 'underground,'" mumbled a third.

AT THE height of the Mau Mau emergency in Kenya in the Fifties, one of the most dreaded sounds was the call of the reed-bark horn. Its tones were enough to invoke the sacred oaths sworn by some Kikuyu farm workers, and obliged them to kill their white masters. The Archive Hour: Death in the Bush (Radio 4, Saturday) gave an account of the terror that lurked after dark when so-called "oathed gangs" secretly operated against the settlers. On isolated estates, lone Englishwomen defended themselves with revolvers as they tried to listen to the BBC World Service. In Kikuyu villages, loyal employees received "punishment" visits late at night. Meanwhile, Nairobi politicians tried to find peace in their time. The story was told with the use of recorded material carefully juxta-

posed, so that the voices of long-dead Mau Mau leaders spoke beside those of the retired policemen who'd spent years trying to round them up. All that was missing from the menacing atmosphere was the stridulation of insects at the margins of the forest. For there are insects everywhere, especially ants. In *Mapping the World* (World Service, Wednesday) an American scientist explained the march of ants across the Earth's surface, how ants in their millions leave chemical trails to help them find their way and how ants therefore never get lost. Another American scientist talked almost poetically of "the consciousness of bacteria", a reference to the way even the simplest organisms always know where they're going. Nick Rankin's programme about biological mapping demonstrated

THE WEEK IN RADIO



MAGNUS MILLS

that blue whales can navigate the entire Atlantic Ocean through sound resonance, while honey-bees are capable of calibrating the sun, moon and stars. Next week he moves on to human beings, whose maps are generally less accurate.

If you place two strangers in a wilderness, then more than likely they will be drawn towards one another. Whether this could be to their mutual advantage, or not, was the subject of *In the Solitude of the Cotton Fields* (Radio 3, Sunday), a play about two men making a deal in a deserted warehouse. Conditions seem perfect: the dealer has something to sell, and the client has something he needs. Yet however close they come to completing their business, they are prevented from doing so by distrust and vanity. Instead, they circle and peck at each other like birds in the darkness. Russell Dixon and Gerard McSorley gave taut performances in this radio version of Bernard-Marie Koltès's masterpiece, which concluded that commerce is the most melancholic of things.

There was still more gloom in the Meridian Feature - Los Angeles: City of Mirrors (World Service, Monday). Christopher Frayling journeyed through the paranoid city asking what had gone wrong in this paradise of wide open spaces and sunshine. "People choose to be bad," suggested the film director Carl Franklin. "The garbage is fantastic in Beverly Hills," countered the film director Paul Mazursky. Another film director, Lawrence Kasdan, talked of a sort of net that connects everybody together, so that no one can get out. Frayling didn't talk only to film directors, though. There was also a guy who had a big cowboy voice and spoke of Los Angeles as an oasis city. He sounded as though he'd just arrived by horse. "Kevin Starr," he said, introducing himself "California State Librarian."

ARTS DIARY

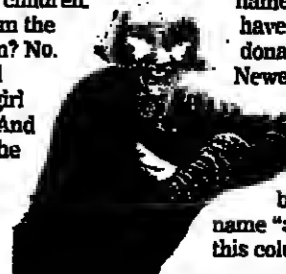
DAVID LISTER

IF YOU watch children's television this morning and are stunned by its inanity, then you have a new champion. She is Anne Fine, the children's novelist. She told last weekend's Culture Wars conference that she wanted "to nail the old cinderella that telly encourages reading. This is a marketing device. Children would read more books if they didn't spend 18 hours a week vegetating in front of the telly."

Worst of all was "the three-hour tide of noisy, senseless drivel that is Saturday-morning TV, with its crass questions to prompt a phone-in". She spoke from experience, having been a guest several times. On each occasion she was told she had received more calls than any other guest. She asked the producers why, then, they didn't have a programme about book authors. No reply. The children's writer Helen Cresswell recalled adapting E Nesbit's *The Phoenix and the Carpet* for TV. Penguin Books asked her to write a novelisation of it. "But there already is one," she replied. "It's by E Nesbit - and you publish it." They replied that it was too difficult for children. Did she slam the phone down? No. She started writing. A girl has to eat. And she does, she says, "feel quite guilty about it." I WENT to

the Jackson Pollock retrospective at the Tate armed with the audio guide narrated by Paul Gambaccini. My copy had a high-pitched, speeded-up Gambaccini. It sent me round the different periods of Pollock at breakneck speed. "Oh dear," said a Tate official when I returned the cassette, "we're not meant to give out that tape." But they should. It is the perfect audio adjunct to Abstract Expressionism.

THERE ARE two contenders for this week's Artspeak Award. Jane Horrocks must be nominated, for saying that she is giving up the theatre after playing Lady Macbeth because the play "emotionally highlights the bad things that you're going through in life". It was, of course, the production in which Miss Horrocks had to urinate on stage every night, so maybe it was the combined strain on soul and bladder that drove her to the edge. But she is pipped at the post by Absa, the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts. On Thursday it changed its name to Arts & Business. "Both the new name and the identity have been generously donated by Interbrand Newell and Sorrell," it said. We can all get in on this philanthropic artspeak. I hereby donate the name "arts diary" to this column.



THE BOOKS INTERVIEW

A Brooklyn bridge-builder

Edwidge Danticat - once a poor immigrant, now a rising literary star - talks to Christina Patterson

When Edwidge Danticat arrived in New York at the age of 12, she spoke in a whisper. She knew only a few words of English and had not seen her parents since she was four. Being Haitian was bad enough at her school, without the added burden of a heavy Creole accent. Yet, at the age of 26, she was shortlisted for the National Book Award, the American equivalent of the Booker, and now, just 30, she teaches two days a week at New York University. It is difficult to believe that this elegant, extraordinarily beautiful young woman, at ease among the brocade armchairs and polished mahogany of the Waldorf, spent her formative years in the slum district of Port-au-Prince.

As a small child, living with her aunt, uncle, grandmother and younger brother, Danticat wasn't sure what had happened to her parents or if they were coming back. She gradually learned that, like many Caribbeans, they were in the capital of the American Dream, working all the hours God sent in the hope of a better future. When the immigration authorities finally deemed her cash-driving father and factory-working mother able to support their two Haitian children, as well as the two sons they had produced in Brooklyn, Edwidge and her brother were catapulted out of their familiar childhood world into a cold, tough city full of strangers.

Their parents, too, were strangers. "The first year or so was difficult," says Danticat with characteristic understatement. "Even calling them 'mama' and 'papa' felt very unnatural. You develop a different kind of relationship, but I think the years that you lose you never get back."

Ingrained with "immigrant work-ethic pressures", combined with "eldest child pressure", Danticat braved the taunts of her classmates and knuckled down to serious study. She was intensely aware that her parents, who "worked from early morning to late at night" to keep the six of them in their two-bedroom flat, had high expectations. They hoped for a doctor daughter or perhaps an engineer, but Danticat settled for economics. The night before her finals, however, she would find herself overtaken by a story and compelled to write it down.

She ended up joining the Master of Fine Arts programme at Brown University, developing *Breath, Eyes, Memory* from a short story into a novel. Publication followed, with rave reviews. The Danticats' daughter's hobby was getting out of hand.

"I come from a place where breath, eyes and memory are one, a place from which you carry your past like the hair on your head," says Sophie, the book's narrator. Reflecting her creator's dual experience of a childhood with relatives in Haiti and a traumatic transition to life in New York, this poetic, pared-to-the-bone and moving narrative is shot through with the folklore, stories and painful history of Haiti.

Here, the significant characters are all women. Sophie lives with her aunt and grandmother and then joins her mother in Brooklyn. All have suffered heartbreak and disappointment, not least the traumatic "testing" of virginity that poor Haitian mothers inflicted on their daughters to ensure the continuation of their one saleable commodity.

These scenes provoked hostility among middle-class Haitian-Americans, who claimed never to have heard of the



EDWIDGE DANTICAT, A BIOGRAPHY

Edwidge Danticat was born in rural Haiti in 1969, under the Duvalier dictatorship. When she was four her parents emigrated to the US, leaving her and her younger brother in the care of relatives in Port-au-Prince. Aged 12, she joined her parents in Brooklyn and published her first writing two years later. She graduated from Barnard College in 1990 and went on to join the Writing Program at Brown University.

Breath, Eyes, Memory was published in 1994, followed by *Krik? Krok!* in 1995, which was shortlisted for the National Book Award, and *The Farming of Bones* in 1998. In 1994 she was included in a *New York Times* article on "30 artists, 30 and under... likely to change the culture for the next 30 years" and was named by *Granta* as one of the "next 30 Best of Young American Novelists". She lives in Brooklyn.

practice, and thought that the first Haitian-American writer to publish in English should have presented a more positive image of the homeland. "I didn't realise until writing this book how much difference there was between poor women and rich women in Haitian society," says Danticat. "But the people who might understand everything I'm saying can't read. For me, that's heartbreaking."

Illiteracy rates in Haiti are among the highest in the world, and significantly higher for women than men. Even in spoken language, social differences are

perpetuated. There is, says Danticat, a strong matriarchal sense in Haitian life, "a very strong sense of women holding things together", but "these women who were like giants in my life, when they went to the bank they were made to feel small, because they didn't speak French well enough."

Creole, the language spoken by the poor, was rarely written down, while French was the language of the authorities and of dead white males such as Victor Hugo and Emile Zola. It is perhaps not surprising that, for Danticat, the writing "just started to come in English," a language which offered

"a neutrality" and "a kind of distance, one more layer between the story and yourself." Storytelling was a central feature of her childhood, sowing the seed of all that developed. Danticat learnt her first lessons in narrative during the blackouts that were a part of daily life in Port-au-Prince.

She loved "the interaction of generations, the one time when the eldest people in the family could sit with the youngest ones and it was a completely equal exchange." As a child, she devoured Ludwig Bemelmans's Madeleine books and dreamed of writing her own little-girl adventures.

However, as someone born during the dictatorship of "Papa Doc" Duvalier, she was intensely aware that "words can be deadly" and that writers in Haiti often ended up in prison, in exile or dead. On arrival in the US, the first book she read was Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. She was amazed not just by its unflinching honesty, but by the fact that its author was happy and alive.

Danticat was hesitant about making the transition from oral to written language, not just because of the dangers associated with writing, but because she "knew it was a pale shadow of actually being in the presence of someone telling you a story."

But she was also aware that "once the storyteller dies, the story is gone." "Once you migrate," she muses, "you put a big ocean between you and the story and memory falls you. When you write a story, at least it's there. It exists."

The title of her short-story collection, *Krik? Krok!* - the traditional storytelling call and response - could not have been a clearer indication that she had decided to take on the challenge. These stories, written over a seven-year period, offer haunting, heartbreaking vignettes of Haitians trying to forge a daily life against a background of poverty, violence and oppression, people whose "names don't matter to anyone but themselves". The first, "Children of the Sea", has particular resonance in a week when another 40 Haitians fleeing from their homeland have drowned off the coast of Miami.

Thomas Wolfe, shake hands with Edwidge Danticat, your spiritual heir," thundered *Newsweek* as the American heavyweights vied with each other to pile on the praise. Danticat found herself in the company of Philip Roth and Madison Smartt Bell on the shortlist for the National Book Award and cast into the unexpected role of an unofficial ambassador for her home country.

It was a responsibility she found increasingly weighty as she set about researching her third book, *The Farming of Bones* (Abacus, £9.99), published this week. Spanning 60 years, it is a devastating account, written from the point of view of a young Haitian servant-girl, of the events and aftermath of a massacre in 1937 on the border with the neighbouring Dominican Republic, after its regime had rounded up the Haitians who came to work there.

This is, says Danticat, the story she has always wanted to write, though at times she was overwhelmed by the sadness of the tales she was told. "I was only able to work on this when I told myself that I was telling one of many stories," she reveals. The novel is, if anything, even more understatedly moving than the previous two, a searing lament for Haiti's troubled, tragic history.

It is not surprising that she feels a little drained after this, the culmination of six years' work. Eventually, she plans to explore more of Haiti's colonial history, but at the moment she is content to work on a TV documentary with a friend. For now, this quietly spoken, self-assured young woman is happy to live with her family, who remain unmoved by all the literary fuss.

"I missed so many years with my parents and I like their company," she states. She has a "little office", a safeguard against the neighbours' assumption of babysitting on tap, but her own trousseau, embroidered as a child, remains, crisp and starched, in her bottom drawer.

COVER STORIES



AS POSH Spice celebrates the joys of motherhood, ex-colleague Ginger is enjoying being even richer than she was last week. For Transworld have paid in excess of £500,000 for her memoirs, and *If Only* will be released this autumn. As revealed exclusively here last week, agent Mark Lucas hand-picked several publishers to participate in a beauty contest. What clinched it for Transworld was the fact that they publish *The Celestine Prophecy*. "Geri's very into new-agey things," explained Patrick Janson-Smith, deputy MD. Publishers were invited to Halliwell's Hertfordshire home and all found her "charming".

ON HER outing at Harrods, Monica Lewinsky took fright at the sheer number of snappers. What wasn't widely reported was the surreal chase, through china, garden furniture and cookware, as Monica and her security detail fled with journo in hot pursuit. Even the music was surreally appropriate: in one department, Frank Sinatra crooned "I've been a rover", presumably in honour of Bill; in another, Linda Ronstadt pleaded "Rescue me".

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS yet again for embattled Beryl Bainbridge. This week brought news that she is shortlisted for the 1999 Commonwealth Writers Prize. She will find that some of her competitors speak with funny accents.

AT THE height of Margaret Thatcher's crackdown on leaky civil servants and memoir-writing ex-intelligence men, Morris Riley's manuscript on Kim Philby and his friends was rubbished by George Kennedy Young, a former deputy director of MI6. It seems that Riley, a Sheffield accountant, named powerful individuals with personal links to Philby. Young accused Riley of "smeared" British intelligence but, in the late 1980s, a certain Peter Wright corroborated his findings. *Philby: The Hidden Years* will finally be published next month by Janus - aptly, for a book about traitors.

HEADLINE HAVE signed up what they believe is the millennial novel, *Turn of the Century* by Kurt Anderson of *Spy* magazine (New York's *Private Eye*) is described. Inevitably, as the *Bonfire of the Vanities* for the coming decade. The publisher paid well into six figures at a keen auction.

THE LITERATOR

Clean hands, dirty tricks

'What is truth?' said jesting Pilate. He would not stay for an answer, but Miranda Seymour goes in search of the elusive reality behind his myth

ERIC GILL, working on a stone bas-relief figure of Pilate for Westminster Cathedral, spent 17 years chiselling out a face for us to hate. Gill's Pilate stood for authority at its worst, the cold mask of a man in the pay of a powerful Empire. At the end of a century of colonial oppression, Gill intended his Pilate to be a contemporary indictment. The sculptor had thought of everything, except for the unexpected tricks light can play. Caught between the gleam of the cathedral floor and the play of shadows above, Pilate's face took on an unintended expression, of longing and incomprehension.

Gill's instincts were sure. The man Tiberius sent out from Rome to be the new governor of Judea was keen to please his master. Tacitly, outrageously, his first act was to confront the Jewish population with gigantic gold medallions, set along the battlements of the great Antonian fortress, each of them offering a dazzling image of the emperor. His second was to propose the erection of a mighty aqueduct, as monstrous to ancient eyes as a Tarmac highway, across some of the province's most sacred sites. Philo, his Alexandrian contemporary, called him a brute of "inflexible, stubborn, and cruel disposition," presiding



Pilate: the biography of an invented man by Ann Wroe
Jonathan Cape, £18.99, 352pp

ing over an administration notorious for "endless savage ferocity". Philo's Pilate would not have had a second thought about ordering the crucifixion of a Jewish troublemaker.

Was Philo right? The aqueduct proposal was Pilate's doing, but the images of the emperor may never have decked more than his own apartments. There are no other indications of Pilate as a provincial tyrant. If Matthew's Gospel is correct in stating that he brought his wife Procula to Judea, Pilate becomes a bit of a softy. Roman governors were in the habit of leaving their wives at home.

The truth about Pilate is

that we know nothing which cannot be questioned. Ann Wroe's book is not a search for a man who can't be found, but a clear-sighted and intriguing look at Pilate down the ages.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, writing when Christianity was outlawed, prudently soft-pedalled Pilate's role. The Romans were in control, not therefore, a good idea to let a Roman governor be the villain of the piece. Matthew may, nevertheless, have gone a bit over the top in granting the governor's wife an off-stage role to defend Jesus, and in letting Pilate perform the un-Roman act of handwashing during a trial. (Handwashing was part of a Jewish religious ritual.)

The only hints of Roman responsibility in the gospels are in the form of death - the Jews never went in for crucifixion - and the presence by the cross of a Roman centurion. Luke lets the centurion repent, but he is still there to see the deed.

In 381, the Nicene Creed stated baldly that Pilate crucified Christ. The medieval storytellers preferred to take their lead from Matthew's mention of Procula. The Pilate of the mystery-plays (which Wroe updates with some wonderfully funny translations) is a preening, sensual figure, always

keener to be back in bed with his wife than taking tedious decisions about rebel leaders. This Pilate was a jester, designed to keep an audience smiling. But he evolved at the same time as della Francesca's *Flagellation*, in which the governor watches the scourging from a detached distance, convincing "were it not for the fact that the hands of the beaters break into his calm rectangle of space, drawing him into the consequences of his orders".

Wroe's book is studded with such moments of quiet insight. Again and again, she jolts the past to life with an unexpected phrase. Caesar's death becomes more vivid when we know that he was clutching an armful of papers to be signed, like any modern minister. Pilate's fate when he returned to Italy is as dimly-lit as his governorship. Was he ever pricked by a twinge of guilt? Probably not, but my favourite last image of him is still as one of the three traitors in Walter De la Mare's word-picture of Herod, Judas and Pilate riding like ghosts, searching for the shriving only Jesus can bestow: an invention, of course, but no more than the sexy preener of the mystery plays, or the conscientious governor Matthew set free with a bowl of water.

ONE OF the most disconcerting experiences of my literary life was to find myself taking second lead in a poem by D J Enright. The piece in question - part of a sequence with the ominous title of "Hospital Journal" - finds the poet on the stairs of the London Library chatting to a younger man who, amid much polite badinage, does not realise that his companion is seriously ill. Enright, it turned out, had been suffering from a kidney tumour and could barely stand, while I wittered on about how well he looked. Mortified at first, I cheered up a bit on realising that this is how Enright works, whether as poet or essayist, and that the slightest shard of talk or print is fair game for his muse. Business, not personal.

The fragments gathered in *Play Resumed* (a successor to his 1996 commonplace book *Interplay*) are an impressive demonstration of what might be called the centralising tendency of Enright's mind. Newspaper headlines, pompous instructions on official envelopes, train announcements - all are fuel for the Enright flame, a gnomic little rumination, or series of ruminations, on time past and lost decades, each tailed with a characteristically deft and lacerating sign-



Play Resumed by D J Enright
Oxford University Press, £18, 205pp

off. A typical moment comes when he reels through a list of innendo-laden books ads ("QPD readers do it in the bath") to muse "Sex sells books. What do books sell?"

Inevitably, the principal target trailed through this accumulation of mini-chapters is rubbish: the kind of stuff that fills 80 per cent of supposedly serious newspapers and 95 per cent of terrestrial television. Coming across the "Real Life" section of a Sunday newspaper, he finds its contents consist of "the serial liaisons of people one has never heard of, fashionable restaurants here and abroad, fashion models of all sexes,

the egos of meandering columnists, agony aunts". Then comes the sting. Does all this imply that the rest of the paper is unreal? "No, not exactly unreal: just not very pertinent or true to real life."

There are several points to be made about this sort of lament, which elsewhere might degenerate into costive old-blokeiness. One is that it proceeds not from elitist disdain but from a kind of shocked humanism that can't fathom why a serious newspaper can waste space on the pros and cons of letting your bra strap show. Another takes in Enright's attitude to the depravities of popular culture, which deserves to be separated out from some of the other varieties on display.

To someone like John Bayley, for example, as evidenced in *Iris: A Memoir*, popular culture is an excuse for a kind of sumptuous posing (at least one facts to bring back despatches from an extraordinary world which, it is assumed, the reader has never encountered. Enright's position, on the other hand, is that of the man who has kept his eye on TV and the newspapers for the last 40 years and is only now beginning to roll his eyes at some of their enticements.

This might make *Play Resumed* sound like the worst kind of "Why oh why" journalism. In fact, it is desperately funny, buoyed up by an habitual self-deprecating humour in which much of the irony is visited on the ironist, and ripe to be slotted into an exiguous category of casual jottings that includes Anthony Powell's journals and the notebooks of Geoffrey Madan.

Delight in its humour and humanity, though, is rather tempered by the circumstances of publication. That one of the handful of really good poets England has produced in the last 50 years - Queen's gold medal, C. Litt and all the rest of it - can be summarily sacked by his publishers (as part of Oxford's recent clear-out of its poetry list) is simply an act of cultural vandalism. It's just the sort of thing Enright likes writing about, and I look forward to reading his comments on the wraith who currently chairs the OUP finance committee.

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COVER
STORIES

AS POSH Spice celebrates the day of motherhood, ex-sister Ginger is enjoying being even richer than she was last week. For Transworld have paid in excess of £500,000 for her memoirs, and if only will be released this autumn. As revealed exclusively here last week, agent Mark Lucas hand-picked several publishers to participate in a beauty contest. What clinched it for Transworld was the fact that they publish *The Celestial Prophecy* - that's very into new-agey things," explained Patrick James-Smith, deputy MD. Publishers were invited to Halford's Hertfordshire home and all found her "charming".

ON HER outing at Harrods, Monica Lewinsky took fright at the sheer number of snappers. What wasn't widely reported was the surreal chase, through china, garden furniture and cutlery, as Monica and her security detail fled with jaws a-flap. Even the music was curiously appropriate in one department, Frank Sinatra crooned "I've been a rover", presumably in honour of Bill Clinton. Linda Ronstadt stood "Rescue me".

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS yet again for embattled Beyoncé. This week brought news that she is shortlisted for the 1999 Grammy Award for Best Female R&B Vocalist. Her competitors speak with funny accents.

AT THE height of Margaret Thatcher's popularity on 15th October 1984, a magazine called *Woman* published a special issue devoted to her. The cover story was by Philip Wainman, a former deputy editor of *PM*. It seems that Wainman's article was so popular that it was reprinted in the *Woman* magazine. The *Woman* magazine was published in 1984, and the article was reprinted in the *Woman* magazine.

THEIR first book, *The Habsburg Empire*, was published in 1984. The book was a success, and it was followed by *The Habsburg Empire* in 1985. The book was a success, and it was followed by *The Habsburg Empire* in 1985.

showing
cks the new philistines
ngs in that camp, too.

NEW AUTHORS

Expensively shaved, Michael Bywater can face the world. Why do our features fix our fortunes?

The daily mirror's bad news

There will be time," muses Mr Prunty. "To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet," and so there is. Even if there is not, we make it. Each morning, no matter how late I may have risen, I go to the bathroom, ply my Super Badger "Chubby No. 3" shaving brush from Geo. F. Trumper, strike up a fragrant lather (violet, lavender, West Indian limes) and slice the bristles from my face with a Gillette Mach 3 razorblade whose development cost was in excess of \$10 million. The blade rests, not in the serviceable handle provided by Gillette, but in an elegant, Edwardian-style confederacy of ivory and brass, costing some £45. Afterwards, I apply an astringent sweep of the Bloc Osmo, an alum stone from France, followed by one of a collection of soothing balms and skin-foods. Nothing is too good for my face.

If you could see my face, you might wonder why it deserves this treatment, at the expense of my schedule, my deadlines and my breakfast. You might wonder why I run my hand over my freshly shaved-and-salved cheeks, marvelling at their smoothness; why I peer critically at features I have seen over a hundred thousand times, which I have spent, in total, over seven full weeks, 24 hours a day, staring at. What is so special about my face that it demands such adulation, care, time and expenditure?

Nothing at all. My face (although, like all faces, unique and - by people of my own ethnicity, at least - instantly recognisable) is just one among billions, all of which receive similar attentions. This universal self-regard distinguishes us from every other species; and yet in all that time spent before the looking-glass or the shaving-mirror, we never see ourselves as we are. The mirror reverses, not left and right, but



The Face:
a guided tour
by Daniel McNeill
Hans Hamilton, £16.99, 374pp

front and back; flips us over, moves our face through our skulls and out the other side. Even the most symmetrical face - symmetry being one of the markers of beauty hardwired into our aesthetic and carnal sensibilities - acquires asymmetries of affect: the lop-sided grin of Mills and Boon novellas, the quizzical eyebrow, the imbalance in musculature of a system governed by a semi-bicameral brain, even the effects of sleeping on one side. The face we prepare is not the face others meet.

Yet we prepare them all the same. If I do not indulge in my shaving ritual, I feel wrong all day. The condemned man precedes his last cigarette with a final shave, grooming the face that death will smooth for good. I know a woman who decided to kill herself; before she swallowed the pills, she gave herself a facial mud-pack, then did her makeup, eyes, lips and cheeks. The rule, even in *articulo mortis* is: moisturise, moisturise, moisturise. She made herself up, then made her self.

To gaze at one's face in a mirror is like peeping through a window into a parallel universe, one where our own workaday face is an object of devotion, precious and perfectible: a universe where, one day, one's face will come right.

In this book, Daniel McNeill offers a grand tour of the face. He ranges from Dracula's teeth to Jenkins' Ear, from the myth of the Jewish

nose" (actually, he points out, uncommon among Jews) to Greek tragic masks. He speculates on the bluish (why did we develop blushing at a time when we were all black?) and discusses our almost universal inability to fake facial expressions, wondering whether that is why we value and admire actors to the point of obsession. Is it because they can fake it - and, what's more, fake it 20 feet high in close-up on the movie screen.

McNeill has no thesis. There is no argument here; rather, a recitation of fact and fancy, speculation and folklore, the Botokodo of Brazil with their breast-deep lip-plates, the crocodile-dung face-packs of Roman women, the real cause of wrinkles, the archetypes of beauty, the racism of the eyes and the absurdity of racism itself; laughter and anger, likeness and caricature; the muscles of the face, magic-workers with whimsical names: Risorius, Masseter, Orbicularis oculi, Buccinator. However, McNeill misses the old tale of the medical school dean invited to say grace at a formal dinner. His mind going blank of all liturgical forms, he intoned "Orbicularis oris levator labii superioris et frontalis; mentalis procerus," and everyone devoutly murmured "Amen."

We are drowning in a sea of faces, and most of the ones we notice - brought to our attention by the highly-skilled and highly-paid snake-oil salesmen of advertising companies and media industries - are so unlike our own that they promote a chronic, low-grade self-loathing. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston Smith was faced - "faced!" - with the giant face of Big Brother; the Russians had Uncle Joe Stalin; fallen nations under the Roman yoke were subject to daily exposure to the emperor's face on coins, wall-reliefs and statuary. To be a despot, first learn to



Let's face it: the application of skin food and moisturiser is not always enough

love your own face. But the faces we see most represent not power, which can be overthrown, but beauty, for whose demise we must await Time's pleasure. One may resent the face of the glowering hegemonist; to resent beauty seems childish, but who has not secretly hoped that the latest supermodel, the latest hunk, would not one day wake up looking like the rest of us, and know what it's like? Who has not wished, indeed, that Tony Blair's face would not simply fall off altogether so that we'd never have to see that smirk, those little eyes, those damnable teeth, ever again?

And who has not wished that their own face could be

different? I know that if I had a better nose, just the one chin, a chiselled jaw-line, piercing blue eyes - well, my life would have been different. How? I do not know. But different, better.

The daily experience of the truly ugly is unimaginable. Kingsley Amis, in *Take a Girl Like You*, introduced his ugly chemistry-master, Graham. At one point, Graham quotes Shakespeare: "Eternity was in our lips and eyes, Bliss in our brows bent." It's not a question of jealousy, Graham explains; it's incomprehension. What are they talking about? What do they mean?

Attraction and beauty are not necessarily congruent; yet beauty - symmetry - brings

with it favour, delight, luck. We are visual creatures; we wear our beauty, or lack of it, at the forefront of our interactions with the world, exactly where we wear our eyes. We gaze, and see the gaze returned, unlike dogs, who have the delicacy to go behind each other's back to make their judgement. We poor creatures are defenceless against the judging gaze of others, and so we shave, groom our hair, powder our faces and paint our eyes as armour against that searching regard.

The face is a perennial fascination, and so is Daniel McNeill's book. Were he Japanese, he would be said to have gained face. In any case, he can look the world in the eye.

Trouble shooting

Lesley Chamberlain enjoys a novel that takes issue with the half-truths of the TV headlines



A Foreign Country
by Francine Stock
Corgi £4.95, 272p

THE CONSPIRACY of half-truths behind much television news reporting forms the backdrop to this haunting fiction about the moral and political values of two professional generations. As a wartime civil servant, Daphne, now 74, drew up lists of Italian immigrants to be deported on suspicion of Fascist sympathies. There was little firm evidence, but she felt she did the right thing for her country. Fifty years later, glamorous TV anchor girl Rachel wants to branch out into something meaningful and scents a story - or the chance to apportion blame.

She tries to bring Daphne into contact with a man she blacklisted. But for Daphne, even the facts that the deportees' ship was torpedoed, and innocent parties suffered and died, only reflect "the cruelty of chance and the strangeness of life". The only factor that might have brought her closer to public regret is her unrequited love for her son, Oliver. He has been under pressure from the cradle to be as rational as his mother, and she dreads letting him down. Of course, it doesn't look that way to him. Thanks to a neat plot, Oliver's evaporating filial promise and general weakness is summed up in the designer relationship he hardly enjoys with Rachel.

Did Daphne do wrong? In his middle, Oliver might have thought so, had work not left him too exhausted to think. Do we really care? The "issue" plot seems as forced as many such issues in our newspapers, and fails to drive real action because it only equips characters with second-order desires. But the novel takes off as a remarkable piece of thinking when it allows us to compare Daphne's experience with Oliver's, as he makes a documentary in somewhere like Chechnya.

Francine Stock's point seems to be that we have a moral need to specify an essential element in our life and work as "real". In Daphne's day, that element was supplied by war, patriotism and commitment to family. For Oliver, whose home is instinctively the office, and whose job as a TV producer is to keep mixing the facts until he gets a

pattern suitable to the moment, there is no such element - just a vague belief in individual freedoms. Trying to understand both rebels and government forces in a "post-sophisticated, barely political" land, Oliver hardly grasps what keeps those people going: a sense of national belonging, just as Daphne had. The charismatic post-cum-prime minister Mehkur, la teases him. A quick interview, then back to some fashionable spot in London? At least my world is real to me.

Mars might have called it post-industrial alienation. None of Stock's characters, not even the aggressive, defensive icon Rachel, dressed for power, is happy about the "desolate landscape of the newsroom" which increasingly frames all our experience. As a graceful and intelligent figure on our screens, and now a voice on the radio, Stock should know.

Both the setting of the "Chechnya" plot and these troubled reflections on spiritual emptiness and the yearning for authenticity recall John le Carré's undoubtedly most successful novel of 1995, *Our Game*. What Stock underlines is how not only redundant spies and ambitious journalists, but also you and I, now inhabit a world where all morality and politics seems like mere posturing, as if we were trapped in an endless studio. She reminds us that some of the best real thinking around today is in novels such as *A Foreign Country*.

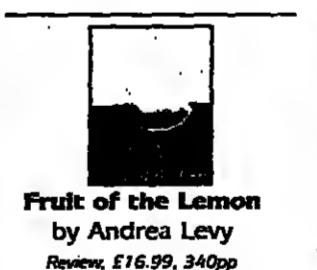
Francine Stock in Morocco: see page 19

A high mind in Jamaica

Andrea Henry wonders where the second generation feels most at home

JUST OVER 50 years ago, Britain became home to the first West Indian immigrants to arrive en masse, as part of a government initiative. Five hundred people, mostly men, arrived, not on a banana boat - according to the old racist taunt with which Andrea Levy's third novel opens - but on a former troop ship. More followed, and some did travel on banana boats. The passengers had berths, and the bananas were kept in the hold. With their children and their children's children, they now contribute to the black population of Britain.

Pat Jackson, the narrator of *Fruit of the Lemon*, is a second-generation Jamaican, as is Andrea Levy. What it means to be Black British is the novel's subject. Faith has grown up unaware of her colour and ignorant of her heritage, courtesy of



Fruit of the Lemon
by Andrea Levy
Review, £16.99, 340pp

her parents' struggle. She has thought herself in control of her life. But, having taken a degree, set up home with white friends, and secured a job with the quintessentially English BBC, being black becomes an issue. It occurs to Faith that life for a black person is not the same as for a white person, however educated or well-spoken, however much a "coconut" (white on the inside) one is. The revelation

hits her like a slap in the face. Her parents pack her off on a voyage of self-discovery to Jamaica, "Home".

This is a book of two very distinct halves, of which the first, "England", is a disappointingly flat read. Levy's portrait of a typical Jamaican family is just that: typical. Her scenarios are weary and her characters are stereotypes, although the expose of Faith's working-class "friends", who like to call a spade a spade, is close enough to the bone to be insightful. On the whole, however, Levy slavishly ticks off the clichés, managing to make troubling issues - such as mixed relationships - feel so tired and lame, it is just possible that the tawdry is a deliberate ploy to make the second half seem more vibrant. If so, it works. By contrast, "Jamaica" is bright and inven-

tive, brought alive by the moving and humorous creation of Faith's colourful extended family, and its extraordinary history. Jamaica warmly embraces its long-lost sister, and Faith gets her life back on track.

To leave behind everything you know, to go in search of a new beginning - with the future of your children, and your children's children in mind - is one of the greatest of Romantic images because it is one of the hardest things to do. Is it harder or easier for the children of immigrants, black and white, to focus on where they are going when more than half an eye must be kept on where they have come from? It is a precarious balancing act, but Levy firmly believes everyone should know where they have come from, for the past deeply affects the choices one makes in life.

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SPOKEN WORD

BY CHRISTINA HARDYMENT

**Cereus Blooms at Night**
read by Art Malik
HarperCollins, 3hrs, £8.99**Iris, A Memoir**
read by Derek Jacobi
HarperCollins, 3hrs, £8.99

"WHY DO audiobooks need reviewing?" said a spoken-word philistine to me the other day. "Surely they're all the same, just books read aloud." Art Malik's powerful and pacy presentation of Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night* ought to be enough to convert him. No, on second thoughts, he is much too conservative to enjoy this horrific but life-enhancing story of savage incest, madness and redemption. But it's a fine example of how much an excellent reader adds to a text – and how an astute abridger judges just what is bearable heard aloud and what is not. Trust me, try it.

APOLOGIES FOR rather a flood of Derek Jacobi recommendations, but *Iris, A Memoir* is quite simply one of the best audiobooks I've ever heard. I didn't buy the book, not being a fan of Murdoch's novels and unable to imagine that I could enjoy any sort of account of her decline into Alzheimer's. But I was quickly hooked by the love, wisdom and humour so disarmingly, openly offered by John Bayley. There is also much unconventional but remarkably nourishing food for thought about the nature of marriage, all greatly enhanced by Jacobi's candid, unhurried reading.

INSPIRATIONS

NOVELIST ROMESH GUNESKERA

The Place

Flying Jumbo jet, glider, anything. A spaceship would be terrific. An aircraft cabin is a place that seems to be nowhere, but I find it steeped in the place left behind and the place ahead.

The Play

Two of the first plays I saw after I arrived in Britain were *King Lear* in Liverpool, and *Antony and Cleopatra* at Stratford. One was produced with hardly a backdrop and the other with gigantic scene changes. I was impressed by what connected the two: the words and their life beyond the stage.

The Film

Hitchcock was important in my novel, *The Sandglass*, and plays a cameo part in the reflections of Pearl, who loves *Suspicion* and *The Thirty-Nine Steps*.



The Artwork
The tiny black statue of an Indus valley girl dancing from about 2000BC which I saw in a museum, in Delhi, 15 years ago. It is only the size of a finger but it seems to speak across the millennia.

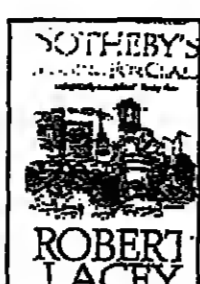
The Music

I find anonymous music frees me best. Chinese pop can be perfect. I can't decipher anything on the CD label, there is nothing I can hang on to. Then I get a real lift: I recognise something unexpectedly familiar and discover something surprisingly new at the same time.

Romesh Guneskera's latest novel is *The Sandglass* (Granta, £6.99).

PAPERBACKS

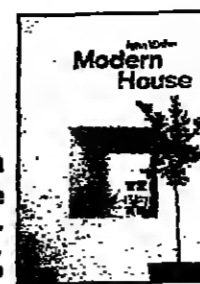
BY EMMA HAGESTADT AND CHRISTOPHER HIRST

**Sotheby's**
by Robert Lacey
Warner, £8.99, 354pp

AFTER RETAILING the history of the auction house a touch dutifully, Lacey's account takes off when the raffish Peter Wilson enters the company in 1939. After war service in M15 (his number was 007), the "old twister" became Sotheby's public face for almost 40 years. During which time, this august institution lent its name to a cigarette brand (not a success), while the accounts dept used the Bond Street premises for orgies. In order to finance a dubious silver deal, Wilson offloaded his shares before a set of poor annual profits. As a result, Sotheby's spent a decade as a subsidiary of General Felt Industries.

**The Stillest Day**
by Josephine Hart
Vintage, £5.99, 210pp

HUSBANDS AND wives don't last long in Josephine Hart novels. Nor do their poor offspring. Like her previous novels, *Damage, Sin and Obsession*, her latest is a highly-charged period melodrama that reeks of guilty secrets and the grave. It's clear from the start that a tragedy of Hardy-esque proportions awaits country school ma'am Bethesda Barnet. Falling for her next-door neighbour (and the school's new English master), she takes to pressing her ear against his bedroom wall. Passions spill over and the repressed spinster ends up committing an unspeakable act over the tea-cups.

**Modern House**
by John Welsh
Picaador, £19.95, 240pp

FORGET THE tawdry confections of the BBC's *Changing Rooms*; if you really want a home with a difference, this is the book to buy. Lavish colour spreads enable you imaginatively to inhabit the cutting edge of domestic architecture: a minimalist castle by John Pawson in Mallorca, an Australian beach house like a vast packing case, the "assumed disorder" of Frank Gehry's Minnesota guest house (six one-room buildings), a house in the Californian desert like an expressionist theatre set, a glass cube in Japan which forces inhabitants into "private, though unpleasantly crowded downstairs rooms". Which is *chez vous*?

**Taking Doreen Out of the Sky**
by Alan Beard
Picador, £6.99, 165pp

A WRITER of the kind of short stories tailor-made for Radio 4: Alan Beard's tales of West Midlands folk are comic, sad and quietly downbeat. Hedged in by boring jobs and tatty homes, his characters take refuge in nostalgia and sex, and, failing that, the odd urban riot. Particularly good on worn-out marriages, Beard's best stories include "Dad, Mum, Paula and Tom", about a son who catches his dad sleeping with his brother's girlfriend (while his mum explores the Internet), and "Country Life", in which an expectant father takes refuge from reality in the arms of a blonde from work.

**The Penguin Book of the Horse**
edited by Candice Baker
Penguin, £7.99, 378pp

DESPITE SOME odd omissions (Swift, Surtees), Baker provides a lively canter round equine literature. Her choice ranges from adolescent favourites (*My Friend Flicka, Black Beauty*) to a scatalogical fragment from de Bernières. Horses inspire literary giants in unexpected ways: roguery on the race-track from Hemingway; a fable about greed from Lawrence; a tender tragedy from Ruyon. Authors as diverse as Jim Crace and M E Pathech explore the rapport between man and beast, but many readers will empathise with Carroll's White Knight. "Any bones broken?" asked Alice. "None to speak of."

**Ready to Catch Him Should He Fall**
by Neil Bartlett
Serpent's Tail, £6.99, 313pp

NEIL BARTLETT's novel of gay sex in the Nineties begins and ends with Madame – an ageing cabaret artiste who brings together two of London's most desirable men with "arse-stounding" results. More than just a catalogue of choreographed erotica, Bartlett's story of "O" (the older man) and "Boy" (just 19), their courtship and eventual marriage, is told with the kind of chummy curiosity that leads the reader to suppose he is as much in on the act as the writer himself. First published in 1991; Bartlett's subsequent novels include the critically acclaimed *Who Was That Man?*, a meditation on Oscar Wilde.

**A Gift Imprisoned**
by Ian Hamilton
Bloomsbury, £7.99, 242pp

THE POETIC life of Matthew Arnold may not be the most seductive topic in the world, but Ian Hamilton is one of our most readable literary critics. In this absorbing account, he reveals that Arnold's talent flowered after the death of his starchy dad, the headmaster of Rugby. Inspired by a number of Frenchwomen, in particular the mysterious Marguerite, Matthew produced some hot stuff: "Ah, they bend nearer – Sweet lips, this way!" This emotional outpouring ceased when Arnold, in homage to his father's arid morality, returned to the straight and narrow, passing 30 years as a schools inspector. Duty sucked him dry.

**Hannah's Gift**
by Thomas Eidson
Penguin, £6.99, 360pp

IF YOU'RE not man enough for the novels of Cormac McCarthy, Thomas Eidson writes the B-movie version. A mystical Western set in the brush-covered deserts of New Mexico and Arizona, Eidson's tale relates the story of tough, but tender, lawman Tucker Gibbons and the woman who saves his life. A recent widower, Tucker carries around his memories like a sore thumb; injured in a shoot-out, he falls for the auburn-haired beauty who miraculously brings him back to life. Apaches and ambushes and mesquite burning fires – the American West at its rootin' tootin' best.

BESTSELLERS

Reaching parts that no other charity can, Red Nose Day has infiltrated the bestseller lists this week: *Five Go Mad in the Kitchen*, published to coincide with yesterday's event and containing an enthusiastic collection of recipes, not necessarily all of which one would want to eat, goes straight in

at number one on the non-fiction lists. That leaves Alan Titchmarsh free to challenge the position in a week's time. Old-timer, Bernard Cornwell's latest *Sharpe* story has knocked the heavily-hyped newcomer, *Come Together*, off the top of the non-fiction list, while Catherine Cookson is stuck

firm in fifth position: that should please Bantam who still have a couple of her unpublished manuscripts waiting in the wings... Compiled from data supplied on sales over seven days ending 7 March 1999
© Bookwatch Ltd, 1999

ORIGINAL FICTION

TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	PRICE	WEEKLY SALES
1 (4) <i>Sharpe's Fortress</i>	Bernard Cornwell (HarperCollins)	£16.99	5,877
2 (2) <i>The Testament</i>	John Grisham (Century)	£16.99	5,747
3 (3) <i>Single & Single</i>	John le Carré (Hodder)	£16.99	4,738
4 (1) <i>Come Together</i>	Josie Lloyd & Emlyn Rose (Arrow)	£5.99	4,428
5 (5) <i>The Thursday Friend</i>	Catherine Cookson (Bantam Press)	£16.99	2,152
6 (6) <i>Caroline's Sister</i>	Shelia O'Flanagan (Poolbeg)	£5.99	1,169
6 (-) <i>Night Whispers</i>	Judith McNaught (Pocket)	£5.99	1,169
8 (9) <i>Messiah</i>	Boris Searling (HarperCollins)	£5.99	1,120
9 (10) <i>Southern Cross</i>	Patricia D Cornwell (Little, Brown)	£16.99	1,081
10 (6) <i>Liar Birds</i>	Lucy Fitzgerald (Black Swan)	£5.99	1,078

ORIGINAL NON-FICTION

TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	PRICE	WEEKLY SALES
1 (-) <i>5 Go Mad in the Kitchen</i>	Various authors (New Crane)	£1	4,197
2 (7) <i>Ground Force Weekend</i>	Alan Titchmarsh (BBC)	£9.99	3,348
3 (1) <i>Station X</i>	Michael Smith (Channel 4)	£14.99	3,324
4 (3) <i>Little Book of Feng Shui</i>	Ulan Tui (Element)	£1.99	2,905
5 (2) <i>Men are From Mars...</i>	John Gray (Thorsons)	£8.99	2,525
6 (8) <i>ITV Formula One Guide</i>	Bruce Jones (Carlton)	£5.99	2,354
7 (6) <i>Della's How to Cook</i>	Della Smith (BBC)	£16.99	1,811
8 (4) <i>The Year 1000</i>	R Lacey & D Danziger (Little, Brown)	£12.99	1,648
9 (5) <i>Seafood Odyssey</i>	Rick Stein (BBC)	£18.99	1,616
10 (-) <i>Time Team</i>	Tim Taylor (Channel 4)	£18.99	1,282

'THE FUNNIEST BOOK I'VE EVER READ, PERHAPS THE FUNNIEST BOOK EVER WRITTEN'

Val Hennessy, Daily Mail

A hilarious tale, expertly told. I recommend this book unreservedly. Independent on Sunday

Really funny! Independent

Hilarious! Simon Hoggart, The Spectator

A searing and utterly brilliant expose of tabloid television! Daily Mail



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Presented by The Barbican Library

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5.30pm Sunday 21 March Barbican Hall

Richard Holmes: The London Biography Lecture
Biography - Life or Death? Richard Holmes cross-questions his art and quizzes the work of some contemporary biographers

7.30pm Sunday 21 March Barbican Hall

Joseph Heller An interview with the author of *Catch 22* and *Heart of Darkness*, who will also answer questions from the audience.
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COUNTRY MATTERS



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On farms all over the western Midlands, Gloucestershire Old Spots pigs are being spruced up for their annual show and sale, due to take place at Ledbury on 17 April. This will be the third show organised by the GOS Pig Breeders' Club, and it will mark a further stage in the rehabilitation of splenic animal.

An Old Spot - every "ss" is normally open in the everyday usage - is a lay, long-eared creature, with big, sack splodges on a whitish background. The breed was not formally registered until 1913, but everywhere in our part of the country - pubs, on postcards, on trays - are representations of spotted sows taken from paintings at least 150 years old, and it is clear that the *laid* sow, or something like them, existed early in the 18th century.

Thirty years ago, the Old Spot was thought to be a low class, but now it is rightly in the ascendant, owing largely to the enthusiasm of a few dedicated farmers and partly to the action of consumers against the wild pork which is all that supermarkets are prepared to handle. Old spots are recognised as endangered the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, the club now has more than 600 pedigree sows on its register.

Among modern owners, few are as nerdy as Eric Freeman, who sows the pigs on his farm at Wynton, near Gloucester. As he is it: "They're much the happiest in the open, so they lend themselves to the movement for eating animals that have been looked after kindly, and naturally fed." Also, says: "They're quite characters, none of them. What they get up to sometimes you can't help falling on the gate and laughing."

In earlier times Old Spots were known as "ward pigs", because they lived in the "ward" (enclosure) of Severn Valley, grazing the sward summer, rooting among the es, and guzzling on windfall mast. In the autumn until it was too dry their meat acquired a magically sweet flavour. Legend has it that the black spots were originally tines, caused by the impact of iron fruit.

Another staunch fan was the late-lamented Jasper Ely, who had an orchard at Priding, beside the Severn, and I shall never forget the Hogarthian scene in his cider shed when the harvest was coming in. Casks full of last year's brew were ranged along one wall. At the far end, two young men would be toiling at the press that squeezed the apple pulp. The floor was running with juice. Jasper himself, his halo of white beard and hair surmounted by a blue nautical cap, was propped against a doorpost, tankard in hand, shouting out: "Don't fuck about, you two! Keep turning!"

The smell of apples blended inextricably with that of pigs, for over a wooden partition a huge sow was suckling her litter. A man with a squeaky voice kept announcing:

"Old Spot sow wi' thur'een on 'er!" and every now and then somebody tipped a bucket of crushed apples over the wall, so that by nightfall the sow was as high as the men were.

Jasper used to collect spent grain from the brewery in Uley, a village nearby, and feed it to his pigs. When Chas Wright, the brewer, brought out a chocolate-dark strong ale, there was only one name for it. As he points out, many strong ales are called "Old Something" – Old Peculier, Old Roger, Owd Bob – because they are traditionally matured before going on sale.

Thus the new beer inevitably became Old Spot – as did a pub in the town of Dursley, when Chas took an interest in it. Last year the Old Spot was runner-up in the National Pub of the Year competition – and so, one

way or another, the name is going strong in the county. Yet it is the excellence of their flesh, rather than sentimental memory, that is really bringing spotted pigs back. To Andy Binks, a butcher now working at the Chesterton Farm Shop on the outskirts of Cirencester: "They give an old-fashioned meat, firm, with a good grain and real flavour. The pork you get from commercially grown pigs just has no fat. Unless you've got apple sauce with it, if you shut your eyes you wouldn't be able to tell what you're eating."

One important difference lies in the fact that the Old Spots handled by Chesterton's are all free-range. Another derives from the way in which the pigs' carcasses are treated after being slaughtered - and here sounds a fascinating echo of

William Cobbett, the vociferous agricultural reformer and champion of the poor, who flourished at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th.

Cobbett urged every cottager to keep a pig as a vital part of the domestic economy, and he was adamant about its preparation for the table. The bristles, he laid down, must be removed from the skin by burning rather than by scalding because the taste of meat from a singed hog was far superior to that from a scalded one. He therefore gave precise instructions as to how the freshly killed pig should be "laid on a narrow bed of straw, no wider than his carcass, and only two or three inches thick. He is then covered all over thinly with straw to which, according as the wind may

be, the fire is put at one end. Today the method is more refined but the aim is exactly the same. Whereas in big slaughterhouse pigs are scalded in boiling water, those destined for the Chesterton shop are kept dry, the bristles being scraped and shaved off. The result is crackling such as most people have never tasted.

The pigs shown in old paintings have barely credible dimensions: bloated rectangles teetering on thin pins, they could hardly have survived if they really had been that shape. You long to know how they would have squared up against Foster's Sambo the 21st, the Old Spot who holds the record for the highest price paid for any pig in Britain; he fetched 4,000 guineas (£4,200) when sold at auction in 1994.

NATURE NOTES

IT WAS no surprise to learn that in the West Country a cock pheasant has become so ferocious as to prevent a postman delivering the mail. At this time of year game birds grow highly aggressive in defence of their adopted mating territories: apparently losing all fear of man, they recklessly stake all in keeping intruders off their watch.

Even now a pair of greylag geese hand-reared by a neighbouring farmer are making it hazardous for any vehicle to drive along



Make my day: grouse in attack mode Ardea

the lane past his house. Hissing, bowing and weaving, the gander is quite ready to take on any car that comes along.

Grouse are particularly fierce: males often attack, and sometimes kill, each other, pecking at the back of rivals' heads. The other day, on a Yorkshire moor, I came across a cock grouse and a man in what looked like one-to-one conversation. Enquiries revealed that the bird, which must have weighed all of a pound and a half, had just physically attacked the 12-stone human being, who was innocently going for a stroll. Females have a different

method of protecting their young. Pheasants, partridges, duck and grouse will all simulate injury, fluttering pathetically away across a field as if with a broken wing, to decoy intruders away from their broods, before flying off.


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The subtle, enchanting Barnhaven primulas have been lovingly safeguarded through the generations.

Anna Pavord tracks down the genuine article

The secret to having a good garden, said a friend of mine, is to find out what likes you and then grow a lot of it. It's good advice, but I don't always follow it. "Oh, please let's be friends," I plead, as I crouch over a myrtle that would obviously prefer to be anywhere else but in our patch. "Do stay, do stay," I beg a ramunculus that is edging out of a border like a guest trying to escape from a really BAD party.

So it was a pleasure to return from two weeks away and find the garden brimming with primroses, which evidently are prepared to like us. Clumps of a white Barnhaven primula, one of the few varieties that I got around to splitting last year, are now flowering between dark blue hyacinths and the low, pale, ferny foliage of sweet cicely, *Myrrhis odorata*. In another group the colours are reversed, with white hyacinths and a stray bit of *Euphorbia robinae* which absent-mindedly wandered off from the place in which it had been put, partnering blue cowslip primulas. I grew them years ago from Jared Sinclair's Barnhaven seed.

He is now one of the many ghosts that haunt our garden - I hope happily. Nine years ago, the last-ever brown envelopes of primula seed arrived from this extraordinary Cumbrian seed specialist. "Farewell," said the note that came with them. "On battered wings we are finally buzzing off. Maybe in years to come we'll be croaking 'Wasn't it fun' and fall cackling from our perches. Maybe."

"Cherish them," said Jared about his extraordinary plants. "They will be with you longer than we will." I sowed a mixture of coloured primroses called 'Butterscotch', copper, bronze, apricot and yellow, a pot of

polyanthus 'Valentine Victorians', rich crimson pinks, and another pot of polyanthus 'Rustic Reds' the colours of tawny wallflowers. Never have I felt so anxious about seed. It was worse than being an *accoucheur* to kings.

But that was a long time ago and though the garden is bright with primulas, the strain is no longer pure Barnhaven. They have been crossing with all the other primroses in the garden and I have not been rigorous enough about weeding out these self-sown bastards. Though cross-bred, they are still extraordinarily pretty: smudgy colours of pewter, bronze, grey purple and dirty pink. So, of course, I had to go to Sonia Wright's nursery in Wiltshire to make good the damage. She is one of the saviours who keep the Barnhaven strain of primroses alive and available. My plan was to replace the navy blue cowslip primroses I had lost.

But Ms Wright's primroses were all in flower too, and it would have been criminal to leave behind the plant with petals as deep as oxblood damask. And one grey-blue Barnhaven primrose from the Muted Victorian series) looked awfully lonely on its own. And so it went on...

Ms Wright started the nursery (she describes it as "a wide and somewhat eccentric collection") five years ago, on a windy plot of ground she had borrowed from a neighbour. Her office is in a high, rust-coloured old shepherd's van parked on the edge of the field. From this retreat, the smell of property made coffee drifts out over the polytunnel in which she overwinters her collection of tender plants.

The Barnhaven primulas do not need that kind of cossetting. They are lined up outside against the fence, flowering in the face of wind, hail and tempest. The only difficulty is that

the roots rot if the compost gets too wet. The plants are happier if they are planted out in open ground. My own soil is heavy, damp clay, which they seem to enjoy, and they grow in shade as well as sun.

Ms Wright has been gardening, she says, since she was three. She desperately wanted to train at Kew, but her father suggested she got "a proper job"; it has taken half a lifetime to get where she wanted to be at the beginning. She first started growing plants to feed her garden-design business (she still does design too), but the nursery grew and grew. Initially, she didn't want to sell any of the treasures she had begun hoarding up around her, but she had to, so that she could buy time to acquire and grow even more. The nursery's growth and her success are "a constant surprise", she says.

The demand for the kind of plants she grows - columbines, iris, grasses, spurge - terrifies and excites her in almost equal measure. Occasionally she wobbles on her crested wave. "I see this wave quite clearly," she says. "A designer wave, of course. Usually that one you see in Japanese woodcuts, the curling one with the lacy edge."

It was her designer's eye that drew her to the Barnhaven primulas in the first place; the flowers were the right size for the leaves, the colours were muted and unexpected. "The Barnhavens are the colours of old-fashioned vegetable dyes. Most of the primroses and polyanthus you see in garden centres are more harshly coloured, like modern chemical dyes."

Like so many good things, the Barnhaven primulas can be traced back to Gertrude Jekyll, who, at the turn of this century, first started selecting different-coloured strains of primroses in her garden at Munstead Wood, in Surrey. She worked



Sonia Wright with primrose and polyanthus selection at her nursery in Stitchcombe, near Marlborough

John Lawrence

on them until 1896, when several seed companies, including Suttons, began to offer seed of her strains.

By chance, the American Florence Bellis, an out-of-work pianist, sensibly spent her last five dollars on four packets of the Sutton/Jekyll primroses. In her garden at Barnhaven, Oregon, she continued the work that Jekyll had begun. She crossed and counter-crossed varieties, producing over a period of 30 years more and more types of the primrose that was by then stamped with the name of her home. For some time Florence Bellis had been in touch with the Cumbrian

nurseryman Jared Sinclair and his wife Sylvia. One day he received a parcel of seed from Mrs Bellis, with a cryptic note "Yours to keep or kill". Heroically, in his freezing, open-sided growing shed, he kept (and developed) her flowers, until, after 20 years, he had had enough.

The torch then passed to an academic librarian, Angela Bradford, who continues to produce and send out seed of Barnhaven primulas from her garden in Britanny. Sonia Wright's plants are all grown from this seed. Provided the seed is kept cool, this is not difficult to do. Sow now on the top of compost in a

smallish pot. Cover the seed with fine grit and leave the pot somewhere shady until you see signs of the first leaves (this may take as much as six weeks). Then prick out the seedlings and grow them on to flower next season. If you are impatient (like me) and want colour NOW, trawl the nurseries.

Sonia Wright's nursery is at The Old Vineyard, Grove Farm, Stitchcombe, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2NG Tel: 01672 514003. It is open all year (10am to dusk) every day except Wednesday and Sunday. You can also get some strains of

Barnhaven primulas from Abriachan Nurseries, Loch Ness Side, Inverness, Inverness-shire, IV2 6LA (01463 861232); Royal Nursery, East Farm Cottage, Royal Northumberland NE20 0SA (01661 886562); or Field House Nurseries, Lenke Road, Gatham, Nottinghamshire NG11 0JN (01159 830278). Michael Loftus also has many of them at his nursery, Woolten's Plants at Wenham, Blackheath, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 9HD (01502 478253). For seed, contact Angela Bradford at Barnhaven Primroses, Langerhoude, 23420 Plouzelambre, France (00 33 296 35 31 54)

SPLIT CLUMPS of snowdrops and aconites as they finish flowering, and replant with a handful of bonemeal.

Many roses have not lost their foliage at all this winter, but if you have not already tackled them, do it immediately. Cut out dead wood, then all spindly stems and suckers. That will be enough for old-fashioned roses. Hybrid teas need sterner treatment: follow each stem upwards until you come to a likely-looking outward-facing bud and cut the stem off above it. A quicker way is to shear over the top of HT roses with a hedge-clipper.

WEEKEND WORK



ANNA PAVORD

Boost tired box hedges with a general fertiliser, such as Growmore or Vitax Q4. Use roughly 2oz for every yard of hedge. For hideously leggy hedges, try cutting them back hard, leaving 4-5in of stem. Feed if they start to resprout.

They may not. Box is not as forgiving as yew. Cut to the ground shrubs such as rubus, grown for their winter stems. If you have not already done so, shear off the old foliage of periwinkle to make way for new shoots now springing up through the dross. **Summer-flowering** hufbs should be planted as soon as possible. Parkers, of 452 Chester Road, Manchester M16 9EL (0161-872 3517) are offering 10 nerines for £2 and a wide selection of lilies, including 10 'Mont Blanc' for £3 and 10 of the deep pink and white July-flowering 'Stargazer' for £4.50. All prices plus VAT

Saving the apples of Prince Charles's eye

A corner of the Garden of England which is devoted to preserving thousands of fruit varieties is itself under threat. By Ursula Buchan

BROGDALE, NEAR Faversham in Kent, home of the National Fruit Collections, is a place close to the hearts of keen fruit gardeners everywhere. This is partly because of the inherent fascination of the place, where 2,500 varieties of apples - including one dating from Roman times - at least 500 pears, and a myriad of plums and cherries, grow. It enjoys the best fruit-growing conditions possible in our climate, and is situated smack in the middle of what is left of the "fruit garden of England".

I suspect that the goodwill that Brogdale generates may also stem from sympathy engendered by the financial vicissitudes which have dogged it for more than 10 years, and have resulted, on several occasions, in its being saved from closure at the 11th hour.

First it was the Prince of Wales who rode to its rescue in 1990, when changes in government funding led to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) being forced to pull the financial plug on what had been an important fruit research station. HRE stepped in and, together with the local council, Swale, provided a sufficient mortgage for the Brogdale Trust to be set up. It could then continue to cultivate the National Fruit Collections, with some help in running costs from MAFF, and open to the public. (MAFF owns the National Fruit Collections, but the Trust provides the home and the organisation for them to be visited.) This mortgage, it was agreed, would be paid off over 10 years, ending in 2000.

Unfortunately, not enough



Brogdale: still blossoming

Brogdale Slide Library

to date has been raised by public appeals to pay off the mortgage. The Trust has therefore been feverishly active for the last year in trying to secure Brogdale's long-term future.

It is possible that it has succeeded. The Trust was introduced by one of its Friends to a Kent firm of developers, Hillreed, which has bought the entire estate of 149 acres from the Duchy of Cornwall and Swale Borough Council and paid off the mortgage. The Trust is currently a tenant, but Hillreed has promised to give back 141 acres, provided it can build houses on the remaining eight acres, most of which is classified as "brown-field" land. It has promised also to

provide a new visitors' centre, offices, a laboratory and various other facilities.

It remains to be seen whether Hillreed will get planning permission to establish a residential development of 89 houses in an area where such development would not normally be contemplated. The Trust hopes, however, that it will be considered as an "enabling development", deemed necessary for the continued viability of the Trust and to prevent dispersal of the National Fruit Collections. This application will be considered in the next three months. The consequences of failure would be serious for the Trust, for it would then

have to raise enough money to buy back the land.

In a perfect world, no doubt, it would not be necessary for an organisation such as the Brogdale Trust to depend on such an arrangement to secure its future. But Hillreed's action has enormously boosted morale at Brogdale. As Jane Garrett, the chief executive, says: "Confidence has broken out."

Sponsorship deals are being made, and funds are now forthcoming for a number of educational projects. Education of the public is one of the Trust's main objectives, and one with which it has been highly successful in the decade since Brogdale opened to visitors. The Trust already has planning permission for a number of imaginative fruit gardens on the site, and intends to put in a bid for National Lottery money should Hillreed's application be successful. Having seen the plans for myself, I am rather hoping that the future's bright, the future's apple.

If you wish to support this scheme, write to Brogdale Horticultural Trust, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ. The Trust is also offering a two-for-the-price-of-one ticket to 'Independent' readers, who bring a copy of this article with them, to see Brogdale during blossom time (tickets, £2.50, available from 20 March until the end of June, include a guided tour); e-mail: information@brogdale.org.uk or www.brogdale.org.uk

Ursula Buchan's latest book, 'Plants for All Seasons' is published by Mitchell Beazley (£16.99)

CUTTINGS

NEWS FROM THE GARDENERS' WORLD

Millennium trees 3: oak
The oak is Britain's favourite tree, according to NOP. The top 10 were oak, weeping willow, silver birch, apple, beech, chestnut, cherry, pine, maple and ash. Only three of those are on my own list of trees worth planting to celebrate the millennium. Oak, ash and beech are all sturdy British natives, and there are not enough of them about.

You need to take a deep breath before you plant an oak. They are trees for large open spaces. The native oak *Quercus robur* can easily reach 70ft. Beside the drive leading to Leeds Castle in Kent there is a tree 135ft tall, with a trunk 12ft round.

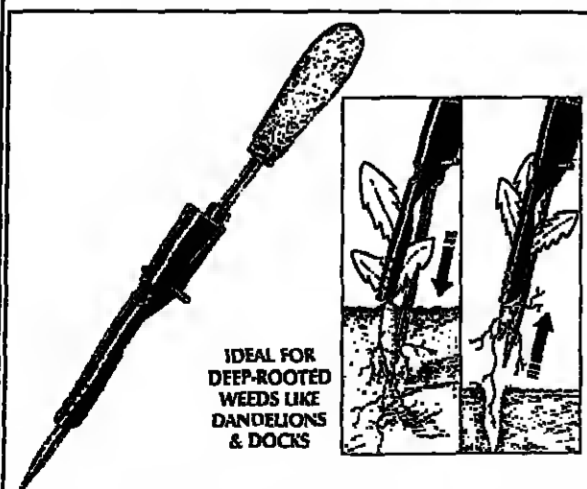


The "Crimea Oak" at Althorp, Northants is 72ft high; at Dunkeld Cathedral in Perth there is one 105ft high. They spread wide, too. There are good foreign oaks, such as the Algerian oak *Quercus canariensis* and the chestnut-leaved oak, *Q. castaneifolia* from the Caucasus, but for a millennium planting, only an English one will do. There are various selected forms of *Q. robur* such as 'Concordia', which has bright yellow spring growth and 'Atropurpurea', with reddish-purple leaves. But it is very slow-growing, and for seamlessness and fitness for purpose the common English oak is the one I would choose.

ANNA PAVORD

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sycamore, silver birch,
beech, chestnut,
pine, maple and ash
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When I was
in Britain
a tree, standing in
the top 10 were oak,
sycamore, silver birch,
beech, chestnut,
pine, maple and ash
two of those are the
kind of trees which
the countryside the
sun, that ash and
and there are not
of them about
said to take a tree
before you plant it
and trees have to
grow. The ash tree
is a tree that can
not be cut down
and it is a tree that
is a tree that can

TRAVEL

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With Atlas at its shoulder

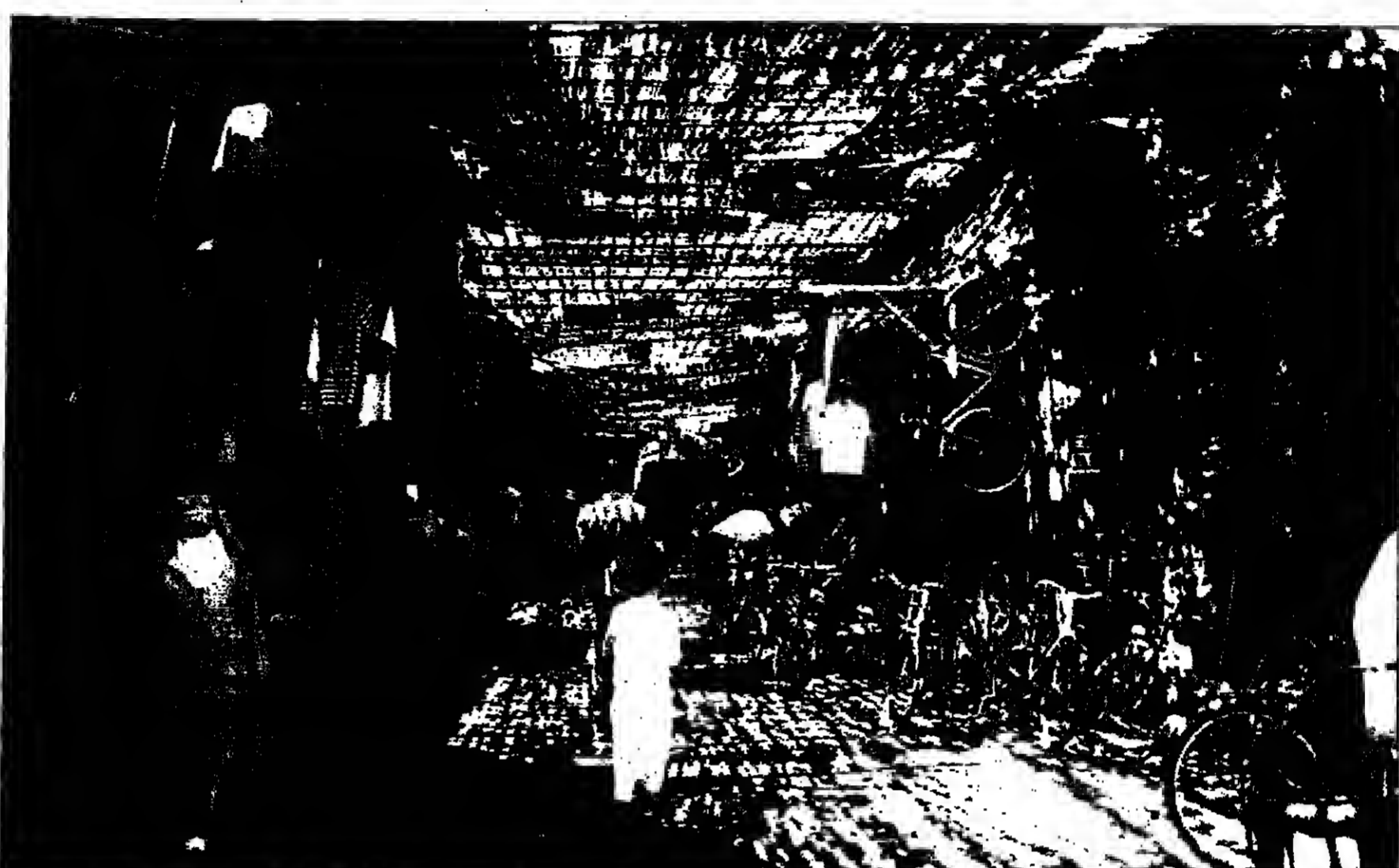
Hippies, hashish and hassle, the stereotyped image of Marrakesh lives on. But, as Francine Stock discovered, it can make for an ideal, if unusual, family holiday, while Antonia Donajgradzka found a tranquil retreat in Yves Saint Laurent's garden

Marrakesh. If you missed out on the hippie trail, it's the place you might once have found your true self in. Ever since my teens, when friends' brothers returned, stubbled and shaggy, I'd always wanted to go. Later, I thought it might be all over, that the moment was past - for me, at least. Then there was the question of whether the children would enjoy it, but now that they're an adventurous seven and four, we reckoned they'd be intrigued. And we promised them snake-charmers. We flew, in the evening, via Casablanca, arriving at Marrakesh at a giddy 10.30pm. But once out of the terminal, everyone fell quiet, heads tilted back in contemplation of the big African sky.

The hotel, Les Deux Tours, was a few miles outside the city, on the outskirts of a ritzy suburb, La Palmeraie, down an unmade road. Outside the gate, which is framed by two massive towers, lies a tiny hamlet with mud-walled houses and a small flock of sheep. Inside, great candle lanterns lit our way down the drive and into a central area from which ran alleyways and paths and doors of a series of six separate villas. Each sits within its own walled garden and has a small pool.

The rooms lie in groups about these villas. Our suite was on the first floor and ran around two sides of a courtyard. The main bedroom was some 25ft long; on one side it gave on to a veranda, with an open fire at the far end. In the corner was a domed bathroom, whose vaulted brick ceiling stretched 20 feet towards the stars. The walls were a milky-cocoa red, inset with bright mosaic, with blue and green herringbone tiles on the floor. The girls' room, which connected via the veranda, had its own terrace.

By comparison with the low dwellings out on the road, the architecture of Les Deux Tours is like Xanadu. You have the impression of crumbling splendour, the joke is that the whole construction is less than a decade old, designed by Charles Boccara - the Sir Norman Foster of Morocco. Great bulkheads of terraces loom over outsized palms and giant shrubs with red-and-yellow trumpet flowers. Meals were served either on your own terrace or



The bright Moroccan sunlight filters down through a lowered roof in fine shards, dissecting the gloom of Marrakesh's souk Robert Harding Picture Library

at night, by an open fire in a small, informal dining room. Cats prowled through the corridors and gardens and slept in the clefts of fig trees. It was the antithesis of an international, functional hotel and we adored it.

The city centre was a 20-minute drive away. The souk is unexpectedly vast. The bright light filters only in fine slices into the gloom from the low roof. The first day we took a guide, an act which represented a mighty collapse of principle, but Shafiq was a relaxed companion and source of fascinating detail as he accompanied, rather than led, us round the various areas of this

canopied city-within-a-city. We saw the blacksmiths and shoemakers, the tailors and silk-spinners, the purveyors of spices, bark and twig medicines and - a big hit - the bent-wood cages of tiny, khaki tortoises, crawling in layers upon each other, interleaved with bright lettuce leaves.

Rebecca, our elder daughter, suddenly acquired a young lime-green chameleon which had been placed on the sleeve of her black shirt. Within seconds he was sympathetically mottled. It was love, of course. Cruel parents to say it could never work.

On the great square, the Djemaa al Fna, we found those snake-

charmers, with their languorous charges. The Man Who Talks to Birds sat on the edge of a large rug with various props - an old packet of soap powder, an electrical fitting, small dishes of bright powders - spread out across it. The birds, large doves, chatted quietly with one another on the opposite edge, casually turning their backs on the great sage. We watched for several minutes, along with a dozen or so locals, then we dutifully dropped our contribution in his plastic cup. A higher dialogue, obviously.

There was hassle, but on the whole the children were fascinated

rather than intimidated. Clutches of small kids would dash up to kiss and hug them and Rebecca felt sometimes that this was simply ridiculous. But then tourists are ridiculous.

Once you move away from the centre, you can see how Marrakesh lies against the backdrop of the snow-covered Atlas mountains. An hour-and-a-half's drive into the Berber foothills, we stayed a couple of nights at Ourgaue, at La Rose-rale. The scenery was impressive but, as the girls said, the hotel was "posher but not nearly as beautiful - or as nice" as Les Deux Tours. La Rose-rale is your international

country club-type establishment, but rather run-down and with mediocre food. However, it has excellent stables, enjoyed by the children who had a couple of hours of well-supervised schooling in a sand ring, and Robert who went out for a high-octane ride in the mountains, and returned, pale but triumphant.


However, La Rose-rale simply couldn't compete with the beauty and eccentricity of Les Deux Tours so - despite the expense - we took ourselves back down to Marrakesh. "Welcome home," said the French manager, with an expression that was both ironic and genuine. We ex-

FACT FILE

FRANCINE STOCK booked seven nights at Les Deux Tours, Palmeraie de Marrakesh, flying Royal Air Maroc from Heathrow, from £570 per person, including bed and breakfast accommodation, through Best of Morocco (01290 825533 or e-mail morocco@morocco-travel.com). You are advised to book at least a week in advance. For reservations at Yacout, call 00 212 4 382929.

For independent travellers: GB Airways (bookable through British Airways, 0145 222111) has two non-stop flights a week from Gatwick to Marrakesh. Royal Air Maroc (0171 439 4361) flies daily from Heathrow to Casablanca, with connections to Marrakesh; fares start at around £250 return.

The Morocco National Tourist Office is at 205 Regent Street, London W1R 7DE (0171 437 0073).



AN OASIS IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

IT WASN'T meant to be like this. It was meant to emerge in a blaze of hot sunshine, dusty and musky, pampering the senses with colour and perfume. Palm trees still in the dry air. The hot sensation of something exotic.

But that morning the Jardin Majorelle in Marrakesh, owned by the couturier Yves Saint Laurent, appeared green, wet and lush. Rain dripped off the vast green spiky leaves and clung to the spines of the bamboo. Along the winding terracotta path that led deeper and deeper into the well-tamed jungle, the puddles shone with the sun's reflection.

Birds called strange songs through the damp air. The three primary colours of the garden were not subdued by the watery sunshine - the rich green of the palms and cacti, the warm red of the brick path and the brilliant cobalt blue of the stone arches, pergolas and the

small museum, contrasted sharply with the pink buildings of Marrakesh. A scraggy cat snoozed in the sun on one of the green wooden benches, and there was a stillness hard to imagine possible in such a bustling city.

In the heart of the ville nouvelle, the only clue to the presence of this hidden urban oasis is only noticeable by the number of petits taxis and *colleches* (horse-drawn carriages) outside the gate. Once inside, apart from birdsong, water is the principle sound, trickling from the fountains and flowing along the waterways that thread through the garden. A long rectangular pond, edged in brilliant blue, leads to a large fishpond, itself overlooked by a blue pergola trailing greenery. Turtles and goldfish swim in the green water beneath a perfect reflection of scudding clouds and wheeling storks.

At the back of the garden is a small museum, set up by Yves Saint Laurent. It is home to a fine collection of local carpets, bridal belts, carved wooden gates, painted woodwork, Berber pottery and Venetian glass. The last room contains the designer's own paintings of Marrakesh and the surrounding area.

Although now owned and maintained by Saint Laurent, the garden was devised over a period of 40 years by the French painter Jacques Majorelle. From 1922 to 1962, Majorelle lived in what is now the museum and built up the surrounding garden.

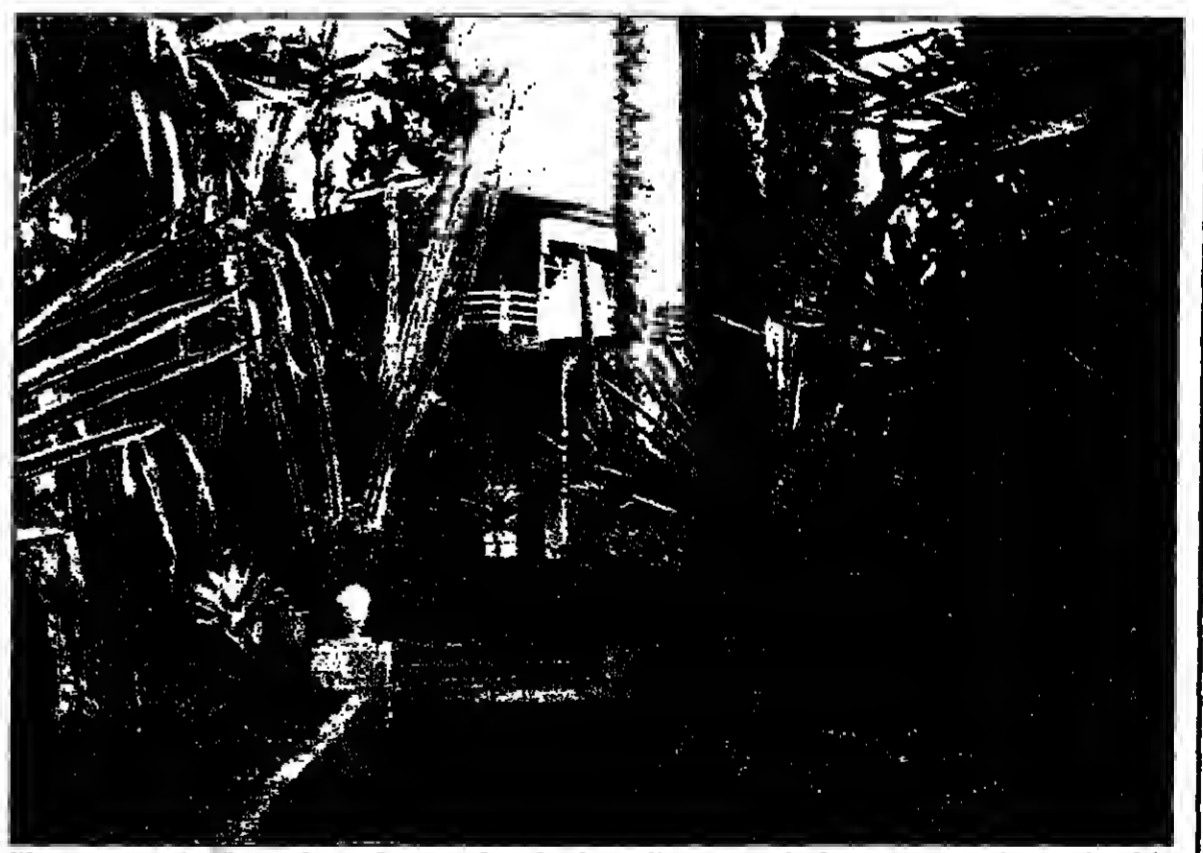
The place is an extraordinary reflection of his talent - notably his use of colour and texture. Although based on classic French garden design, with orderly paths and plants strictly assigned to their own beds, the garden does not scream good taste but feels like an enchanting botanical

installation. It feels more like a work of art than an act of horticulture. Many gardens might aim to achieve this effect, but few could do it as well.

Saint Laurent must take credit for maintaining this mini-masterpiece for more than 30 years, and understanding the original owner's vision so well.

The colours, the sounds and the vistas that you find at every turn make for an extraordinarily sensuous experience, and you depart with the senses filled, an experience more akin to leaving an art exhibition than a small garden.

The Jardin Majorelle is located north of Ave Yacoub el-Mansour in the ville nouvelle. It is open daily from 9am-noon and 2pm-6pm (5pm-7pm in summer). Entrance costs 15dh (£1) and a further 15dh for the museum.



The museum's brilliant colours shout out from behind spiky green palm leaves Antonia Donajgradzka

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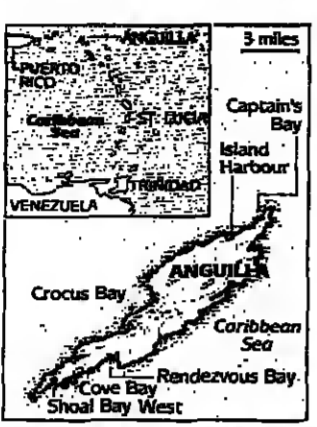
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A cabana short of a Crusoe

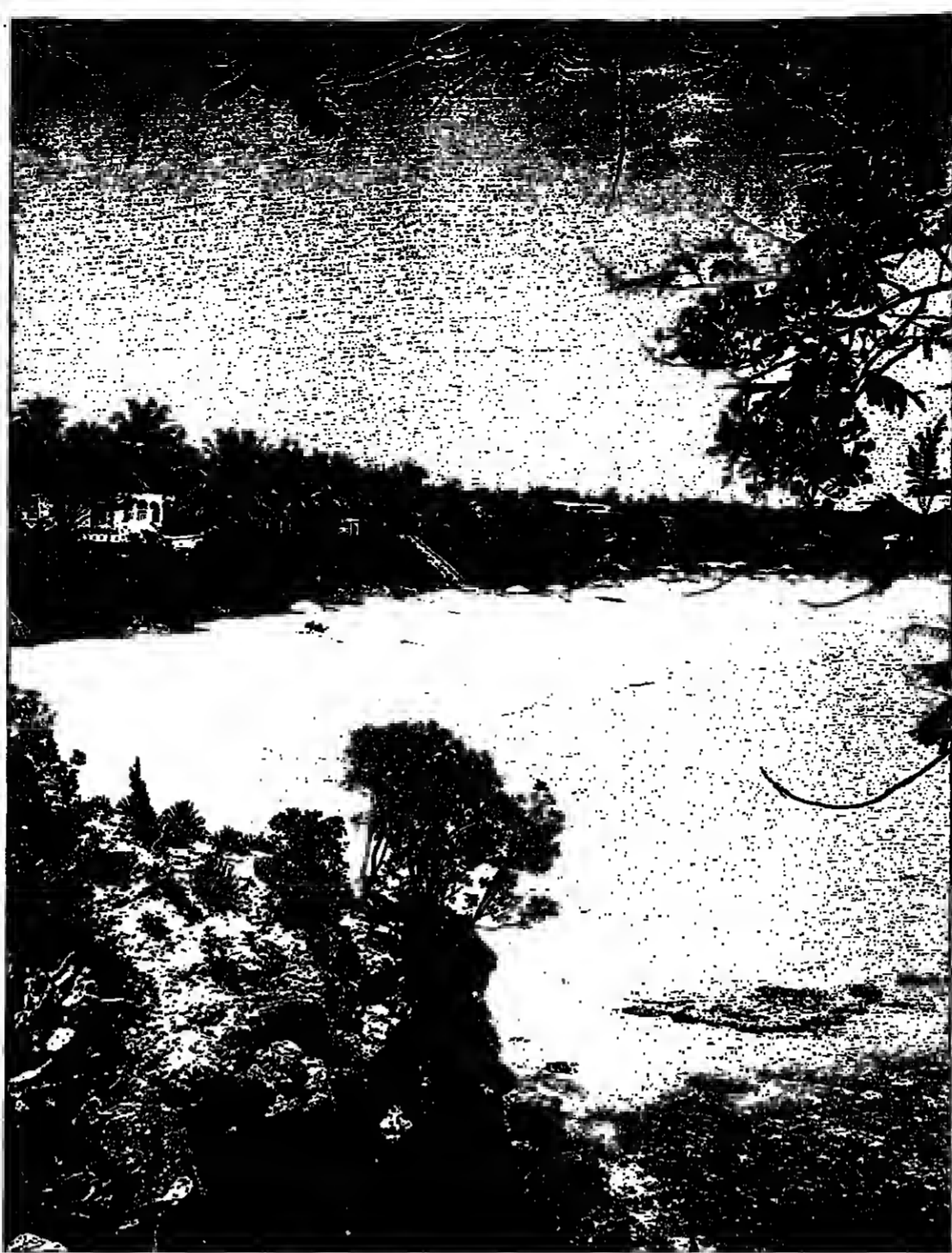
It's not your typical paradise island, but Anguilla is still a glamorous getaway. By Marina Salandy-Brown

The women in charge at Ripples, the bustling Sandy Beach restaurant and bar, are English. Judy, the owner, is from London; Arnel, the head waitress, came from Maidenhead to Anguilla for her grandmother's funeral and didn't go back. "It's great here," she says. "That was in 1988 and her timing was spot on."



Anguilla gave up dependence on fishing and salt exports in the Eighties, and decided to cash in on its natural advantages and our relentless quest to discover the last bits of paradise. Named after its sea-like shape, Anguilla is not everyone's idea of a Robinson Crusoe retreat even though it is three miles wide by 16 miles long. It is a scrubby, low-lying coral island, exposed to the prevailing winds. There are few coconut palms swaying in the breeze, no cascading waterfalls, and a distinct lack of tropical trees groaning with exotic fruit. But what it does have is 30 exquisite beaches – one for practically every day of this month. The names are as seductive as any in the Caribbean: Captain's Bay, where turtles come to lay their eggs; Rendezvous Bay; Cove Bay; Crocus Bay. Some are just small stretches in dramatic settings; others go on for miles, gently lapped by azure waters. All the ones we managed to get to in seven days had dazzling white sand. Shoal Bay must be one of the best beaches in the entire region, with a choice of restaurants and good local music at least twice a week, but I never counted more than six people in the warm turquoise water at any one time. So if your idea of a good beach is one where you have to pick your way through lobster-pink bodies pressed between sea and land, you will feel lost here.

Anguilla is strictly a place for those in the know. The people you meet here are connoisseurs of remoteness. No backpackers, and only a few day-trippers (from neighbouring French Saint Martin). The cruise ships have been all but banned and there are no cheap package holidays. The tour has hasn't yet put in an



Anguilla is home to 30 exquisite beaches and people with more to do than bother tourists

appearance, and the locals just let you get on with it. We got the message as we stepped off the 19-seater plane into Jumbo's belly. I had to round up a porter to get our luggage and, once we were outside, there was no string of soliciting taxi drivers. In fact, nobody ever tried to sell us anything or take us anywhere. Tourism may be the biggest money-earner here, but most of the islanders seem to have better things to do. Only Raymond on Shoal Beach would gently and smilingly ask for a random sum to park us on comfortable deckchairs under some shady parasols on the "best" bit of the beach. And that is the reason to come here – for a completely hassle-free holiday. It's something well-off-Americans have learnt. And they are prepared to pay big money for it. A double sea-view room at the secluded Mallibuana Hotel costs \$650 (£420) a day at this time of year, and the most modest rate at the equally elegant and beautifully designed Cap Jaha Hotel is \$745 (£480). Suites cost in the region of \$2,000 (£1,300) a day. Down at Island Harbour at the other end of the island, Snitly – the legendary inventor of the beach bar in Anguilla – proudly displays a multitude of snaps of himself with famous but shy paradise-seekers. "The only people who wouldn't go unnoticed are the Chicago Bulls," one customer assures me. And Snitly is the man who must take the rap for that. It was he who introduced TV and American sport to the locals, exchanging a quiet beer at the end of a day's fishing for the cheering and booing at the greats of basketball and baseball. Back in 1978, when he put his paradise hut down on the sandy shore, there was no electricity, running water or luxury hotels. He got a generator, played loud music, introduced a barbecue for cooking the island's sweet crayfish and lobster, and just watched the customers roll in. With few cars and even fewer paved roads it was a long trek, but they came – and still do – for his homies ("Every day is a wonderful day when you are alive"), for the warm hospitality and for the assurance that Anguilla is one of the very last havens you can visit. Anguillians are happy with their expensive brand of top-of-the-market tourism, with the island's reputation for haute cuisine and simple exclusivity. It's what brings top chefs such as Marc Alvarez from New York to perform culinary miracles with freshly caught swordfish and tuna. He gets foie gras for his Straw Hat restaurant from France, lamb from Miami and filet mignon from the Midwest. That means that the prices are high – as high as in London. And that's true wherever you go, from simple Snitly's to smart Covecastles, where the chef is French. When I lived in the Caribbean all I knew about Anguilla was that it was the most northerly of the Leeward Islands and formed part of a three-island entity with St Kitts and Nevis, which lie 70 miles away. But in 1969 Anguilla shot to international fame when the islanders rebelled against independence under Kittitian dominance, in favour of colonial rule. The UK prime minister Harold Wilson sent in 315 paratroopers, helicopters, the Royal Navy's RAF and a stand-by detachment of London policemen to put down what the locals call their "revolution". British papers parodied Wilson, and the island's small but excellent Heritage Collection Museum has some highly amusing pictures of the British bobby on beach patrol, making friends with the welcoming revolutionaries. Now, Anguilla is one of Britain's five Caribbean Overseas Territories. It has 10,000 people, a governor, no army, no income tax, no crime, little unemployment and an abundance of peace, tranquillity and the good life, even if it is bottom of the FIFA league. Paradise indeed.

GRIDLICK. A burst water main on London's North Circular Road caused traffic chaos in the capital on Monday this week. Any fool in the absurd position of being in White City at 9am, with a fight to catch from Heathrow at 9.45am for a meeting in Manchester at 11am, was clearly never going to make it. Unless Adrian got involved. This ex-Military Policeman is one of a dozen riders who provide the "tasy bike" service in and around London; the correct spelling of "taxi" is not used, to avoid inflaming the cabbies who are left trailing in the wake of a 1,000cc, V4 Honda motorcycle. You also have to book in advance, by phone (to Addison Lee, 0171-387 8888), rather than hailing a bike whizzing around town. Unlike some minicabs I have used, Adrian appeared ahead of time (having already left a message suggesting we set off a little earlier than planned). He provides a helmet, jacket, gloves – and a briefing about how to be a good passenger. A summary: sit back, stay still and enjoy the ride. At 9.03am we joined the rush-hour traffic on Wood Lane. It wasn't rushing anywhere much, but within seconds the advantage of a bike was obvious: you can be at the front of each set of traffic lights. And on roads full of frustrated motorists all late for work, you can accelerate out of trouble rather than braking into it. Roadworks meant we spent the first five minutes heading directly away from Heathrow. Anyone unversed in the ways of big, powerful motorbikes will get an instant lesson in their fiery characteristics when looping around the Shepherd's Bush roundabout; "sit back, stay still" is not an easy mantra to chant when you feel that the laws of physics are being seriously challenged by the collective angular velocity of you, Adrian and three-quarters of a ton of Honda. The last time I tried this sort of thing was when no other transport was available from Phnom Penh airport. The trip into the Cambodian capital on a Honda 70, a bike both overpopulated and underpowered, was one painfully long wobble. Not this time; I was quite clearly in the safest of hands. The nervous passenger can express any concerns easily, thanks to a two-way talk-back link built into the

SIMON CALDER
How do you 'Sit back, stay still' when the laws of physics are being challenged?

helmet. The system provides for more articulate conversation than can be achieved by yelling through the glass separating a taxi-driver from the passenger. Chiswick came and went with a well-judged swerve or two; it was a treat to be a passenger on a machine driven by someone in the manner normally reserved for cycling, yet at many times the speed. Conversation ceased once Adrian got into his stride on the M4, straddling both the middle of the fast lane and the speed limit. This gives you the chance to notice two things: first, the amazing field of vision that a motorcycle trip permits you, much broader than you get from a car or a train; second, the way that car drivers seem blind to hikers, pulling out with never a first glance nor a second thought. We pulled up outside Terminal One at 9.25am, where I discovered that I seemed to be wearing the most terrible smirk. The taxi bike experience is similar to a first-rate theme-park ride that also happens to get you to the airport impossibly quickly. "That's £30," said Adrian. The same price as a cab, but twice as fast; 10 times the cost of the Tube, but a million times more fun. I tipped him a fiver, and five minutes later was sitting on board a Boeing 747 to BA 1388 at T1 in 30 minutes; on a day when the North Circular isn't submerged, it would be even faster. Then reality set in: the most mundane of delays (caused by a hold-up loading the meals for the inbound flight) made the plane 10 minutes late. The taxi bike service has yet to reach Manchester airport, and the most ambitious cab driver can't reach the city centre in under the quarter-hour. I was five minutes late for the meeting, but still smiling.

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PORTSCATHO in Cornwall. 2 dble bed, gdn, parking, central village, close harbour, sandy beach & coastal paths. 01752 580288

PORT ISAAC luxury farm cottages. 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ND REVIEW
13 March 1999

NON CALDER
How do you 'sit still' when
laws of physics
being challenged?

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Learning to fell the stunning auburn-leaved beech trees of the Pass of Killiecrankie felt like the ultimate in rural vandalism but was thrilling all the same

National Trust for Scotland

I'm a lumberjack with inner calm

Labouring in the wilds of Scotland may not sound like fun but the fresh air and beautiful scenery are a real tonic. By Peter Conchie

Like its strung-out sister Stress, the cherished state of Relaxation has a tendency to arrive unannounced. So it was that half-way through a week's manual labour in the foothills of the Scottish highlands (gazed at the fingers of my left hand and was surprised to see lengths of white nail which had grown in place of the usual chewed stumps).

Cheaper than therapy, healthier than a health farm - there's a lot to be said for a National Trust for Scotland Thistle Camp Holiday. Volunteers between 17 and 70 are eligible to pay good money for some hard labour. The age-range of our group spanned 40 years, and the experience varied widely - it included two Duke of Edinburgh's Award

scheme participants, a former teacher, a prospective lecturer and a computer flooring installer.

The work which was required in the Pass of Killiecrankie was hard and Thistle Camps are a contradictory experience. Projects take place in beautiful areas of Scotland such as Glencoe, Arran and Kintail, but the labour itself is hard, physical exertion is strenuous, but the end result is an inner calm. There are few better feelings after a hard day's work in the bracing outdoors than a hot shower followed by a cold beer with Miles Davis trumpling from the stereo.

Work for the week was split between two historic sites owned and managed by the National Trust for Scotland, the Pass of Killiecrankie, just south of Blair Atholl, and the landscaped environs of the Hermitage, just outside Dunkeld. The steep gorge of Killiecrankie owes its narrowness to geology - a sparkling grey mica-schist rock stranded with bands of quartzite which defeated the ice-age glaciers - and was the scene of the battle of 1691 in which the Jacobites defeated the government forces of William III, marching up the gorge from Perth.

In the shaded pass, afternoon strollers trooped past, hopping over the gaping hole we had dug into the footpath in an effort to install a new drain. The day-tripping tourists probably thought we were serving some sort of community service order as picks were swung and shovels pushed with weary grunts. It's the constructive anarchy that was so appealing. The liberating feeling of throwing around gravel, of excavating a perfectly sound looking footpath until it was instead a heap of rubble, of standing thigh deep in a pool of mud. Never before have I opened the floodgates of a dam draining a pond and, to be frank, being that dirty in public gave me a child-like thrill.

Most satisfying of all was felling trees, the ultimate in rural vandalism. Stunning auburn-leaved beech line both sides of the pass and the sight of such species being unceremoniously terminated worried passers by, many of whom stopped to ask for an explanation.

Thousands of years ago much of Perthshire, like the rest of Scotland, was covered in woodland less than one per cent of this remains.

Neither beech nor sycamore is a native species and both are very invasive, casting heavy shade that kills ground flora as well as native trees. The idea in woods such as Killiecrankie, designated a site of special scientific interest, is to preserve Scotland's natural woodlands.

As another mighty beech hit the deck it was comforting to be able to quote some statistics. Oak trees can support 284 insect species, willows and birch only slightly fewer. Beech trees sustain just 64, sycamores less than half that number of species.

Steve, a ranger, taught us how to fell properly. The idea is to saw a large notch, known as a bird's mouth, into one side of the trunk. This dictates the direction of the fall and is critical: get it wrong and you have a tree in limbo caught in the

Sit down, relax and enjoy the Miro

It's a museum; yet Kettle's Yard in Cambridge welcomes visitors warmly, like the home it once was. By Hugh O'Shaughnessy

THAT flat open city, Cambridge, Kettle's Yard is tucked away, reclusive. Within a mile or three's walk from the splendours of Trinity College and the Backs, the Ede family house overlooks a churchyard, keeping itself to itself though it were some ancient abbey rectory.

This, it is made clear to the visitor, is no ordinary, no vulgar museum. In fact it is not a museum at all, but a house. The front door is kept closed as if it were still the private dwelling of the Ede family, so every visitor or group of visitors is to tug at the bell-pull to an admittance.

The guardians stand behind a door ready to welcome you, smiles of the utmost receptivity, they invite you to sit, your name and, they add, smile fruitfully, "your full postal address, please" in the book on the entrance hall table. If they are not too busy they will, in a manner that would certainly fascinate that talented "spotter" Bill Bryson, find a little small talk about how a night is drawing in, or it's as cold as it might be. You sit that if Her Majesty's Government were ever to issue identity cards to recognised paid-up members of the English middle class, these faces would - ever so sweetly - ask to see yours.

But, flummery aside, this use contains a fine board of 19th-century pictures and objects brought together by those collectors Jim Ede and his wife Helen. As assistant at the Tate Gallery in London in the early Twenties, Ede met and became friends with the painters and Winifred Nicholson.



Soft tones in the Kettle's Yard collection Paul Albutt

They, he recounts "opened a door to contemporary art and I rushed headlong into the arms of Picasso, Brancusi and Braque". Meanwhile Winifred Nicholson taught him the importance of fusing art with everyday living, a lesson that continues to be taught, mutely, to every visitor to Kettle's Yard and which in my opinion is its strongest *raison d'être*.

Fortunately for us, too, Ede, as one of Ben Nicholson's rare admirers at the time, was offered works that no one else fancied, and was asked for no more than the cost of the canvas and frames. There are now 44 at Kettle's Yard. Something similar happened with the painter Alfred Wallace; the house now has 100 of his pictures. In 1936, a decade after the

The collection is a tremendous artistic resource and, as a graduate of England's older university, this correspondent is naturally keen on anything that raises the standard of culture in Cambridge. Having enjoyed a visit, you can still have reservations about the collection and the way it is displayed. There is a certain lack of bold colour; greys and other soft tones predominate. On my visit I was reminded constantly of that other house now open to the public, Pablo Neruda's house at Isla Negra on the Pacific in Chile, and I wished for some of the strong colours and adventurous objects, from flags to anchors, which litter it.

And surely there is room to doubt the wisdom of an enterprise that seeks to preserve such a living thing as a house unchanged for posterity. It is true that you can sit in the chairs, read the books and admire the flowers that are kept fresh in the vases. Yet despite all the semantics, and the effort to preserve a domestic feel, Kettle's Yard is a museum. An unusual museum, an enjoyable museum, a unique museum, run with competence today by the University of Cambridge, yet still a museum. While recognising the imperfections of the place, you cannot but agree with Ede that "There should be a Kettle's Yard in every university".

The full postal address of Kettle's Yard is Castle Street, Cambridge CB3 0AQ (01223 352124). It opens daily except Mondays, 12pm-4pm for the house, and 12.30pm-5.30pm (2pm-5.30pm on Sundays) for the exhibition gallery. Admission is free.

TRAILS OF THE UNEXPECTED NO 4: SHAKESPEARE IN LONDON

HE'S MR Millennium, say radio listeners, and his love life is packing them in at 200 cinemas nationwide. But if you're in London, don't join the queues to catch a glimpse of him - he's on show for you free. The capital is stuffed with Shakespeares, in ink and paint and stone.

If you want the Bard hard at work, make for the lobby of the British Library and the 1787 sculpture by Louis-François Roubiliac. This Shakespeare holds a quill in his hand and leans on a manuscript looking out into space for his Muse. It was commissioned by David Garrick, owner of the Drury Lane Theatre and self-styled protector of Shakespeare's legacy.

In the 383 years since Shakespeare's death people have been out to enjoy honour-by-association with his image. The Chandos Portrait hanging in the National Portrait Gallery is supposed to have passed like a kind of theatrical talisman between Sir



William Davenant, Thomas Betterton and Mrs Barry - the leading lights of 17th-century theatre

the fixed stare of one whose horse is suffering seepage. For the most inquisitive portrayal of the Bard glance up at the exterior wall of The Shakespeare's Head pub on the corner of Soho's Foubert's Place and Carnaby Street.

This 18th-century representation peers down at London's teeming multitude - the many-headed monster. His missing hand is not a sign of neglect but the result of a bomb dropped during the Blitz.

In St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe in the City (a restored Wren church) you can find him on his knees at a "faldstool" - a kind of freestanding pew, his reading matter the Bible, his gaze heavenward. The solemnity is relieved somewhat by two hovering, fleshy putti that part rich curtains to reveal the playwright at his devotions. Giovanni Fontana's 1874 Shakespeare in Leicester Square stares idly in the direction of the north side

Empire "disco inferno". Contempt for such frivolities is revealed in his pointed gesture to the words from *Twelfth Night*: "There is no Darkness But Ignorance."

Inscriptions on these sculptures are like dosage instructions on pill bottles - they tell us how to take our Shakespeares. Particularly popular are lines from Prospero's speech in *The Tempest*. They pop up on the plinth Shakespeare leans on in Westminster Abbey's Poets' Corner and above Southwark's monument. In such places the words admonish the vain spectator, reminding us that we are "such stuff as dreams are made on".

Of course all these images may be part of the Shakespeare conspiracy, distracting us from the real author of the plays. If this is your view, head for Room 2 in the National Portrait Gallery where Sir Francis Bacon hangs dressed in splendid robes.

JEROME MONAHAN

Summertime Cruise of Venice

Venice is on everyone's list to visit at least once during a lifetime which probably explains the high prices of accommodation, not to mention the price of a cup of coffee or a meal. Then, having got there, there is the expense of getting around which normally results in the visitor seeing just a fraction of what there is to see in the time allowed.

During the late spring and summer we shall be operating a series of short cruises on the Swiss-managed vessel, MS Viking Bordeaux, which will be our base for Venice itself and for visiting the ancient port town of Chioggia across the lagoon. The excursions to Burano and Torcello will be made by special launch. The tariff includes return flights from London, transfers and cruise, full board, accommodation in an outside facing cabin with en suite facilities, UK departure tax and services of a knowledgeable local guide.

THE MS VIKING BORDEAUX
The MS Viking Bordeaux is a Swiss-managed, small cruise liner with just 90 cabins spread over three decks. Each cabin comes equipped with en suite facilities and air-conditioning.

On board the Swiss-managed MS Viking Bordeaux visiting Venice, Burano, Torcello & Chioggia

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War and piste, the Sarajevo story

The slopes are de-mined, the ice-rink is no longer a morgue. But will Torvill and Dean be making a comeback? By Stephen Wood

For what, asked my contact in Sarajevo, is the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina famous? He answered his own question: "War, the Winter Olympics, and more war."

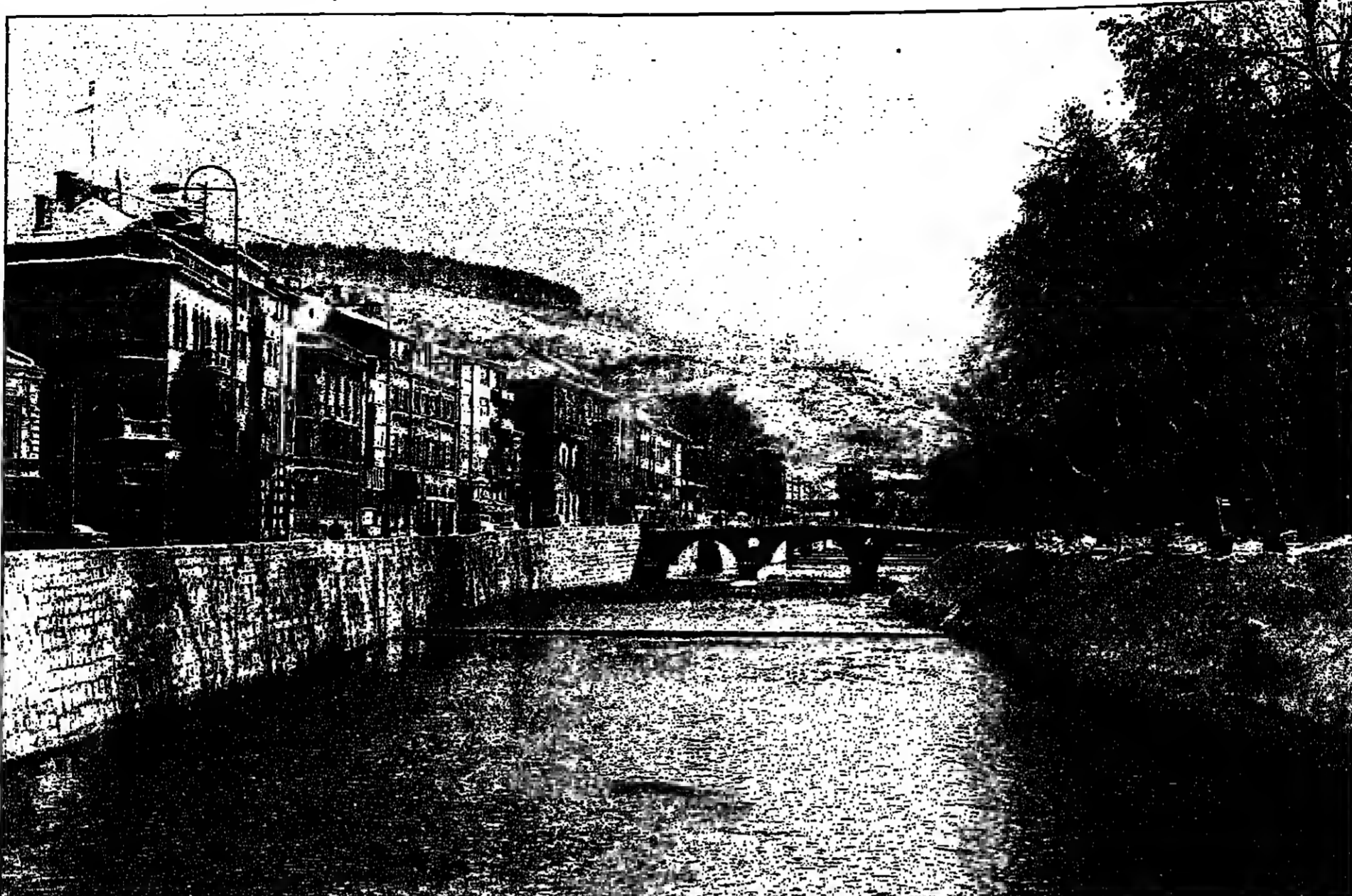
Television came too late to record Sarajevo's arrival on the world stage, with the assassination there in 1914 of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne; but it relayed images, unforgettable in different ways, of the city's other two international events. First there was the 1984 Olympics, made memorable for British viewers by Torvill and Dean's Bolero routine, with which they won a gold medal at the Zetra ice rink. Less than a decade later, during the war in the former Yugoslavia, came the city's siege, with nightly news reports of Sarajevo under attack from Bosnian Serb artillery on the surrounding hills, and soldiers firing from the suburbs into the infamous "Snipers' Alley".

If history tends to repeat itself, however, Sarajevo's limited international repertoire gives grounds for optimism to a group of people who are involved in winter sports in the area - my contact, Piers Thompson, among them. Next year they plan to make a formal bid to hold the 2010 Winter Olympics in Sarajevo.

More Winter Olympics? Why not, when much of the infrastructure of the 1984 games has survived the war?

Jahorina, the resort to the east of the city where the women's downhill race was held, is in need of refurbishment; yet Piers Thompson's company, Harlequin Leisure, takes more than 500 skiers a week there, predominantly soldiers from the UN's stabilisation force, SFOR, based in Sarajevo. To the south, the ski jumps at Igman are back in use and the Bjelasnica resort, where the 1984 men's downhill took place, reopened this season (after de-mining) with a new chair-lift, a café and other facilities for skiers.

Later this month, the rebuilt Zetra ice-rink will be inaugurated, an event which the



Above: 19th-century buildings line the Miljacka river in Sarajevo. Top right: Florian Beck of Germany in the men's slalom event at the 1984 Olympics



after the committee's second meeting, Mr Thompson invited me to join the members for a meal.

If the atmosphere seemed tense, that was hardly surprising for the two Bosnian ski-area managers, this was the first time they had been in Bosnia since the war started, and the committee's members - former colleagues - had been reunited, after seven years, only in the previous week. But the meeting had "gone incredibly well", according to Mr Thompson (thanks largely, he said, to "the unique relationship Piers has with the people here") and, after a few drinks, the mood relaxed. The senior Bosnian representative even allowed himself a political joke.

To someone like me, who had dropped into Sarajevo only for a couple of days' skiing, to sit in with those attempting to repair the damage of almost a decade of armed conflict seemed absurd - but extremely affecting, too. More Winter Olympics? Obviously if I were on the International Olympic Committee, I know which city would get my vote for 2010.

Sarajevo authorities hope Torvill and Dean will attend. Its use as a morgue during the war - what was the car park is now a cemetery - makes the rink something of a memorial to the war's victims; the 1984 bobsleigh run in the hills is more obviously marked by the conflict, being set on a heavily mined area within the International Entity Border Line (IEBL) that separates the two areas into which Bosnia-

Herzegovina is now divided. This division, between the Bosnian Serbs' Republika Srpska and the Bosnian/Croat "Federation" area, effectively isolates Jahorina, as the only one of the 1984 Winter Olympics facilities in Serb territory; it renders the bobsleigh run a no-go area and, thanks to a spur of the IEBL, makes Igman and Bjelasnica relatively inaccessible for Bosniaks (forget the nomenclature "Bosnian Muslims" -

it's outdated) from Sarajevo, in the Federation area.

These political factors make Sarajevo, for the present, impractical as an Olympic city; but as a winter sports area it is already functioning.

The ride from Sarajevo airport, which was itself on the front line during the siege, brings back memories of the distressing wartime television images. True, I had forgotten that Snipers' Alley is about a

wide as the M25 (not surprising, since a real alley would give distant snipers little at which to aim); but the heavily shelled Sixties concrete towers on either side are instantly recognisable. They are either bitten away and partly destroyed, like the building in which the Standard newspaper was produced on every day bar one during the war, or burned out, like the huge Unis block that was memorably turned into a flaming torch by a Bosnian Serb artillery attack.

Now, however, the city trams that once provided targets for Bosnian Serbs and sniper-cover for the Sarajevans merely go about their business, rumbling up into the narrow streets of the old town. Its 19th-century buildings on the southern perimeter, facing the Miljacka river, took a lot of punishment - particularly the beautiful, pseudo-Moorish National Library, which is now being restored. Elsewhere relatively little structural damage seems to have been done, although shell-holes filled with red-tinged concrete bear permanent witness to attacks that caused fatalities. The mosques, some of which date from the 16th century, still stand; and the old Bascarsija market area - all cobbled streets and single-storey wooden buildings - looked so untouched that it could almost be a film set.

The still elegant, busy city feels safer than London's West End on a Saturday night, which is hardly surprising with so many peace-keepers present - not just the SFOR troops but also the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe), OHR (Office of High Representative) and IPTF (International Police Task Force), among others. But as you head towards Jahorina across the IEBL into the RS - that's Republika Srpska, if you're not getting the hang of these military abbreviations - the tensions of being in a former war zone become rather more apparent, if only because the ski resort is right next to Pale, the former stronghold of the hard-line Bosnian Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic.

Bosniaks do not ski at Jahorina. Luckily, a lot of helpful, English-speaking Serbs from Belgrade do, for which I was grateful. Few people in Jahorina speak English (they do not have the Sarajevans' daily exposure to the largely Anglophobic international organisations), and they still use the old Yugoslav dinar; I speak no Serbo-Croat, and I had Deutschmarks - which, along with locally issued "equivalent marks", are the currency of the Federation.

The skiing at the resort is limited: three chair-lifts and two drag-lifts were running, giving access to about a dozen ungroomed pistes, mainly reds, and to large off-piste areas in

between - but not to the 1984 women's downhill run, whose chair-lift has clearly not worked for a long time. The top of the resort is at 1,889m, offering vertical drops of some 300m; but the lumpy surfaces made the descents quite fun, especially for the largely unskilled Serbian skiers. (The SFOR troops did rather better, although some had the handicap of a pistol strapped to their thighs.) Jahorina obviously needs investment, and not only on the pistes. It is short of accommodation, since two of the hotels and many chalets are permanently occupied by Bosnian Serbs who were displaced from Sarajevo in the wake of the Dayton agreement.

Sarajevo's other ski area, to the south of the city, at Bjelasnica in Federation territory, has seen investment this season. And it does offer the thrill of going down an Olympic run, the 1984 men's downhill course. Long, fast and ungroomed, this made me look more like an average Serbian skier than an Olympic contender. But Bjelasnica is currently even more limited than Jahorina, with just the one piste and one off-piste descent open. And it has no accommodation at all; while retreating from the area during the war, the Bosnian Serb army destroyed all of its nine hotels.

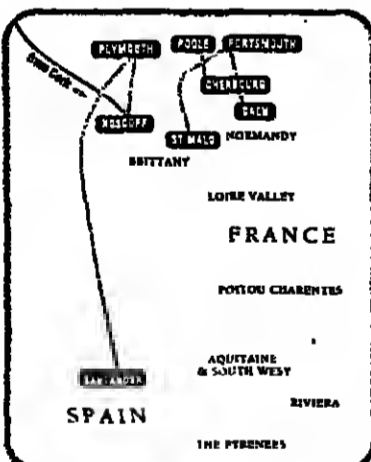
Evidently, Sarajevo cannot compete with Val d'Isère as a skiing destination. But for its interest as a political arena, it has no rival in Europe.

After skiing at Jahorina I met up again with Piers Thompson, a 30-year-old from Cheshire who is now in his second year running Harlequin

Leisure. The company provides accommodation, equipment rentals and other local ski services in Jahorina (and, next season, in Bjelasnica) to the international organisations. But Mr Thompson is looking forward to more normal times, so he and an aid-programme manager for the Refugee Trust Ireland, Killian Forde, are acting as facilitators for the committee that has been set up to revive Sarajevo as a winter sports destination - and to bid for the 2010 Winter Olympics. Shortly

Stephen Wood paid £341 return on Austrian Airlines (0171-434 7300) to Sarajevo, via Vienna. He stayed at the Saraj hotel in Sarajevo (00 387 71-472 6911), for DM157 (£53) a night. Harlequin Leisure (00 387 71-415 076) can organise ski packages in Jahorina from DM530 (£181) per person, based on two sharing, including half-board chalet accommodation and transfers from Sarajevo airport. Credit cards are not accepted in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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Flight 2000: ready for take-off?

Most airlines seem confident they can deal with Y2K, but some are taking no chances. By Hugh Riddell

If you find yourself in Warsaw on 31 December this year, don't count on getting a flight home on the Polish national airline. Until 2 January 2000 LOT will ground its fleet to avoid falling prey to the Millennium Bug. But the Polish airline is in the minority. It was the only airline out of 30 I questioned to admit to alterations to its schedule because of potential problems caused by the failure of computer systems to recognise the year 2000.

The midnight hour is being avoided by five others among those I talked to. Britannia, Airtroups and Jersey European Airways say there is "no demand". Caledonian wants to offer staff the "once-in-a-lifetime chance to celebrate a millennium". El Al would not be flying anyway, since the Israeli national airline does not fly on the Sabbath (between sunset on Friday and sunset on Saturday). A spokesman for the airline, Daniel Saadon, says candidly: "We're very lucky that 1 January 2000 is a Saturday, so we don't have to make a decision."

Fourteen carriers are going ahead with all flights (among them Lufthansa, Air France, Canadian Airlines, Qantas and Aer Lingus) while the other nine are waiting for the green light from information technology departments and head offices. British Airways is not concerned about its readiness (its millennium compliance programme started in 1995 and has had £100m lavished on it) but BA says that a full service over the millennium period cannot be guaranteed.

Young airlines such as Go (aged one year) and easyJet (four years) have systems that were compliant "from birth"; major airlines such as Air France and Canadian Airlines claim to have passed initial tests.

Yet just because an airline's own systems are "clean", it does not mean there are no other digital pitfalls. There are worries that some minor airlines have started their programme "pretty late in the day".

"It's a humongous project," says Updesh Kapur of Virgin Atlantic. "One flight relies on 3,000 computer-related parts."

The web of software support means suppliers need to work closely with their clients, especially on ground-support services. A Britannia spokesman cited baggage loss and gridlocked traffic as potential scenarios, preventing staff and passengers getting to the airport. Then there is air traffic control.

"It is out of our control," says a spokeswoman for BA. Many airlines have questioned the reliability of systems in the Middle East, Central Africa, South America and



On 31 December, you'll need to reach Jerusalem before sunset. Picture by Piers Newbery, a finalist in the Wanderlust/Independent travel photography competition

Eastern Europe. These are zones that, even without a potential software crash, have proved to be "difficult flying", according to a Northwest Airlines spokesman. Mr. Ahi, who flies himself, thinks that pilots should have the requisite training to deal with the situation, should the systems fail. The International Air Transport Association will publish a report in the summer on the state of air traffic control systems around the globe. At least then airlines will know where their pilots are likely to be flying blind at midnight.

Although some airlines cite low demand as their motive for failing to schedule flights over Y2K, travel agents are selling fast. "Our advice is book now," says Beverly Sams, of Thomas Cook Flights Direct. "The cheaper fares have gone." Long-haul carriers are capitalising on demand for exotic locations. BA and Virgin flights to New York are up £60 on the rates charged last year, while Qantas flights to Sydney are being quoted at £1,431 - a £329 rise.

Also, high-season prices will stay high and will not dip, as they usually do, between Christmas and the new year.

AIRLINE CHECKLIST: Airlines which will not be operating between 31/12/99 and 1/1/00: Airtroups, Britannia, Caledonian, El Al, Jersey European Airways, LOT Polish Airlines. Airlines which say they will be sticking to their schedules: Aer Lingus, Air Algerie, Air France, All Nippon Airways, American Air-

THE GREAT Y2K ESCAPE

A HOLIDAY over the millennium may cost you anything up to double what you would have paid last year for the same destination and duration. "People are opting for the old favourites," says a Thomson spokesperson. Perennial hot-spots in southern Spain, the Caribbean, the Canary Islands, Australia and the United States are likely to see the highest demand. Spanish millennium weeks with Thomas Cook are twice as expensive as last year, while Airtroups' week in Costa Blanca has risen 75 per cent to £529. The Cox and Kings tour of Rajasthan's forts and palaces has risen 50 per cent from £2,000 to £3,000. Some operators, like Club Mark Warner, have capped increases at 50 per cent.

The rush to leave the country for the New Year is unprecedented. According to Airtroups research, "81 per cent of people who would not normally travel at this time are considering foreign travel".

In other words, six times as many people as usual are scrambling for a place in the sunrise. Thomson took 15,000 bookings in the month following the first edition of its millennium brochure.

Possibly best value is being offered by overland tour operators who do not depend on hotels. For example, Encounter, whose trips range from the Himalayas to the Amazon, is not increasing prices.

Few operators are issuing more than a legal disclaimer about the Millennium Bug. Most express confidence that airlines will be compliant. At least one views the Y2K scares as "media paranoia".

Tailored trips abound. Cox and Kings recommends a trip to the Inca fortress of Machu Picchu in Peru or a flight over Everest as the millennium draw. Sunrise over the Sea of Galilee is the centrepiece of the tour of Israel organised by Jazmin (whose prices will rise no more than 10 per cent). Alastair McCabe of Jazmin also vouches for Jordanian hospitality, making it "ideal for a party", even though Ramadan falls at New Year.

HUGH RIDDELL

Journey to the Source:
No 6: Irish Linen
There's something deeply satisfying about eating at a table laid with crisp, white linen. To recreate that feeling of pristine, heavy material curling onto your lap, head for Ireland (as if the forthcoming national festivities aren't enough of an excuse).

Linen originated in Egypt and was brought to Britain by the Romans. In the 17th century, loom-possessed Huguenots arrived in Ireland. High-quality damask soon became big business in Ulster. After the flax harvest, fibres were spun and finely woven into lengths of cloth. These would then be sold as unbleached "brown" linen, or laid out along riverbanks to be sun-

THE SHOPPING FORECAST

bleached and then hammered smooth into "white" linen. These days, fields of blue flax are still grown in Ireland to provide small quantities of linen for the luxury market.

To pick up the linen trail, go beyond the abandoned mills of the former "linen triangle" between Belfast, Armagh and Dungannon and visit the Beelting Mill at Wellbrook in County Tyrone (01687 51735 for details), where six deafening mills once hammered out linen by water power.

Next stop, the Irish Linen Centre and Museum at Lisburn (01846 663377). Inside the 17th-century Market House, where weavers once traded cloth, an interactive exhibition details the industry's history and includes spinning and weaving demonstrations. Open 9.30am to 5pm from Monday-Saturday; entrance is free and the centre also houses a

speciality linen shop. A six-seater damask tablecloth here costs from £87, or you could visit

The Irish Linen Company in London (0171 483 8949), where a similar quality tablecloth costs from £140. The £53 you'd save by buying in Ireland would pay for a £48 return ticket from Luton to Belfast on easyJet (0870 6000 000), the £3 unlimited rail deal (see Bargain of the Week 1, right) and a celebratory St Patrick's Day Guinness.

Gadget of the Week
The Nikon Nuvix S compact APS camera (pictured) has just been launched. It is pretty to look at, simple to use (including the zoom lens) and takes reliable, if not amazingly sharp,

pictures. However, its small size (slightly larger, but not much heavier, than a pack of cards) disguises the camera's clumsiness - although there is no outer casing, the stainless steel shell has to be tugged open. The gimmick factor of the APS format makes it a pricey £230 but, nonetheless, this would be a useful addition to any lightweight traveller's suitcase. Call 0800 220 220 for stockists.

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Bargain of the week 1
The Freedom of Northern Ireland for £3.
Northern Ireland Railways cannot boast an extensive network - Londonderry, Portrush, Larne and Newry are as far as you can get from Belfast - but it certainly offers the best deal of any British train company. On Sundays, you can travel anywhere on the 200-mile network for £3. The only condition is that you start your journey before 3pm. Call 01232 899411.

Bargain of the week 2
England to Ireland for £22.50.
This return fare to the centre of Dublin is readily available up to 3pm the day before departure. Three catches: you don't fly, you go by rail and sea, using the Holyhead-Dun Laoghaire fast ferry; two people have to travel together; and, for this fare, you have to start in Chester. Other fares are from Manchester (£25.50), Birmingham (£28), Newcastle (£38) and London (£33). Call 0990 455 455.

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JASPER REES

This is an example of what you might call double nimbyism, in which the perpetrator feathers his own nest while crapping next to someone else's

PAGE 32

THE INDEPENDENT

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A home-from-home in New York

Spring is an ideal time to visit Manhattan. So why not live like the locals do?

By Jon Winter

It felt both awkward and strangely comforting when we turned up at Winston's Manhattan apartment, dumped our bags and set about making ourselves at home in his home. Awkward, as our reason for visiting was not to see Winston. And comforting because we were about to relieve him of his house keys, see him politely to the door and live it up in his plush apartment for a week.

Any feelings of guilt for throwing a man out of his own home soon disappeared when we settled up the week's rent: \$2,363 (around £1,500). That might sound expensive, but split between six friends, it worked out at a thrifty 57 hucks a night (around £35) for a spacious 10th-floor apartment located right on Central Park South.

When you consider that the 1999 hotel occupancy forecast for Manhattan is 61.3 per cent in 1998 – and with average room rates topping \$200 a night – renting an apartment makes a comfortable and surprisingly cost-effective alternative.

Yet most of the guide books seem to skim over this option. We found our apartment on the Internet through New York Habitat. All the formalities were completed by fax from the UK, which meant that all we had to do was pick up the keys from the owner on arrival.

This is perhaps the one area of uncertainty. What if the accommodation is an absolute dump when you arrive? It's a possible worst-case scenario if booking privately with some of the unregulated sub-letting that is available on the Internet and in the New York listing magazines, but all the agencies that are listed on the right claimed to regularly inspect the properties on their books and you are usually able to view the accommodation online.

In fact, although looking pretty smart in the pictures, Winston's place was much bigger and far more appealing when we arrived. The interior featured an intriguing collection of original artwork and cluttered bookshelves, and was crammed with musical curiosities reflecting his profession as an opera director, including an ageing grand piano in the corner. Home comforts included a television and video recorder, stereo, e-mail facilities, free local calls and a monstrous fridge to fill with beers, olives, homestead



You get more than a good view if you rent one of Manhattan's apartments – if you're lucky, fully furnished can even mean a grand piano

Jon Winter

orange juice and the leftovers from last night's pizza.

All in all, renting Winston's home worked out well for us. OK, so we had to service our own rooms and stock our own mini bar, but these are sacrifices worth making to be able to enjoy the company of your friends in a communal space rather than the often sterile environment of a hotel.

There is one downside. When the lethargy sets in after a day's shopping and touring the sights, it's all too easy to stop off at a deli, pick up a six-pack and a Caesar salad and waste an evening in one of the world's most exciting cities engaged in the most mind-numbing of state-side activities: watching TV.

FURTHER INFORMATION

New York Habitat
(www.nyhabitat.com)
550 short-term vacation rentals in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens.
307 7th Avenue, Suite 306, New York City, NY 10001 (00 1 212 627 1416 or: rent@nyhabitat.com)
Big Apple Lodgings
(www.b-apple.com)
Online B&B registry and short-term apartment rental covering Manhattan, Brooklyn and Long Island. Minimum stay two nights

in properties ranging from studios to five-bedroom apartments.
Charles on 00 1 718 953 4590 or: info@b-apple.com
Ingrite's Short-Term Apartments
(www.ingrite.com)
Offers completely furnished townhouse apartments in midtown Manhattan. Properties are \$120 to \$300 per night.
Ingrite Rieck (00 1 212 980 3082 or: ingrite@aol.com)

Oxbridge Property Services
One-bedroom accommodation from \$135 per night, two-bedroom from \$225.
1623 Third Avenue, Suite 104, New York, NY 10128 (00 1 212 348 8100 or: oxbridge@aol.com)
Assured Accommodation Inc
(www.assurednyc.com)
Studios and one-bedroom apartments from \$150 per night, two- and three-bedroom apartments ranging between

\$250-\$500, minimum stay three nights.
00 1 212 431 0569 or: mail@assurednyc.com)
Urban Ventures
(www.nyurbanventures.com)
New York's best-known agency, representing more than 500 properties from studios at \$105 per night to a Central Park West penthouse offering "views of the world (call for details)".
38 West 32nd Street, Suite 1412, New York City, NY 10001 (00 1

212 594 5650. Fax or: anne@nyurbanventures.com)
Alternative Business Accommodations
(www.rent.net/ads/aba)
Studios for a minimum of one month with porter, maid service and a range of extras from \$2,850 per month, one-bedroom apartments from \$3,600 per month.
PO Box 7147 FDR Station, New York City, NY 10150 (00 1 212 4450494 or: alibussac@erols.com)

The Renaissance rides into rodeo town

Rough and rugged Fort Worth lies at the heart of Texan cowboy country. Now it's trying to shed its Wild West image and become a little more cultural. By Jennifer Chevalier

IN THE vast parking lot outside Billy Bob's Texas, a young woman crouches between cars to have a pee. Her friend shrieks and giggles when they find they have been discovered, and both turn off towards the queue outside the bar. It's a steamy Friday night, the temperature has barely dipped below 100 degrees, and Fort Worth's most famous watering hole is packing them in with a mix of drinking, gambling, country music, and bull riding.

"Leyt's git Weiss-turn!" bellows the rodeo compere, just as a young man in a Stetson and leather chaps falls from the back of a bull called Freddy Kruger. Dusted himself off with hither resignation, the cowboy's expression belies the reality of weekends at Billy Bob's: he's like a seasoned porn star, tired of the crowd's astonishment at his prowess, but not ready to give up his exotic and quite particular talent.

This is the Wild West as tourists would always have it: rough, adventurous and slightly vulgar. But the locals – while they come to Billy Bob's for the country music – are tired of the clichés that have taunted them since Fort Worth was founded nearly 150 years ago. The population of Texas has been growing steadily since America's hi-tech industry started relocating here, and with laptop cowboys from the north joining the already oil-rich Texan elite, the combined affluence has meant hunger for something more than simple Tex-Mex culture. So one family has struck back by building a monument to culture and sophistication in the heart of Cowtown.

Recognised as the Medicis of Fort Worth, the Bass family of millionaires has created a proud little city-state amidst the untamed American landscape of skyscrapers and freeways, almost single-handedly revitalising Fort Worth's downtown core. It started almost two decades ago, when the Bass brothers rebuilt a hotel. Then they put up a few skyscrapers – of the tasteful



emerald-green variety. A theatre was added. Bit by bit, they restored the existing low-rise, 19th-century buildings, and added a few art-deco structures for good measure. This year they crowned "Bassville" by building the European-inspired Nancy Lee and Perry R Bass Performance Hall (a tribute to their parents), which now houses a local opera, symphony and ballet. They ensure the protection of the good citizenry with their own private security firm – aka the Bassapo; the burghers, for their part, delight in the munificence of their Renaissance princes, and the fact that the cowboy thuggery of the past has all but been relegated to the old Stockyards district, where Billy Bob does business.

So now the Bass family is in control of about 40 downtown blocks in an area that was once known as Hell's Half Acre. Thoughtfully, it's been renamed Sundance Square.

"It's just a big car park, really," explains a friend from Manchester, who moved to Fort Worth three years ago. And in the centre of the downtown core, where European visitors might expect to see a piazza or a fountain, Fort Worth does indeed have a parking lot, backed by a wall mural of the cattle drives of the last century. But hey, this is America, and it's actually damn convenient to be able to get a parking spot

And once out of the car, the surrounding architecture of the Square is enough to distract from the assortment of all-terrain vehicles in its centre.

Gentle pink granite glows next to sturdy redbrick reliability. Turrets are decorated with mosaic inlay, and lacy marble friels neatly trim the tops of several buildings. The high-rises that exist stand sentinel to the modesty of the immediate downtown vicinity, neither overshadowing nor distracting from the redbrick-paved Square. The new performance hall is a flash of white limestone; two Goliath-sized angels trumpet the arrival of culture to the Wild West.

To be fair, other Ewing-style characters had already set a trend for the Bass family to follow. To the west of the city – to the east is Dallas and the dreary array of strip malls that precede it – is the cultural district. There, the names of the museums are a testament to pre-Bass millionaires. The Kimbell Art Museum (Kimbell was a grains and groceries man before he struck oil) is like a Beginner's Guide to Modern Art. A Gauguin next to a Cézanne, close to a Van Gogh, and then a Munch. It is a refreshingly manageable size to explore, and special exhibits are put together in conjunction with galleries around the world to ensure a greater influx of European masters.

The Sid Richardson (cattle and oil) Collection of Western Art houses the best of American artists Frederic Remington and Charles Russell. Ditto the Amon Carter (newspaperman) Museum, which has also preserved Remington's feral cowboy sculptures, in all their sweat and savagery. The Fort Worth Botanic Garden has studiously recreated a Japanese garden, where fat koi float in calm pools next to the Meditation Garden, confirming the city's nascent nobility.

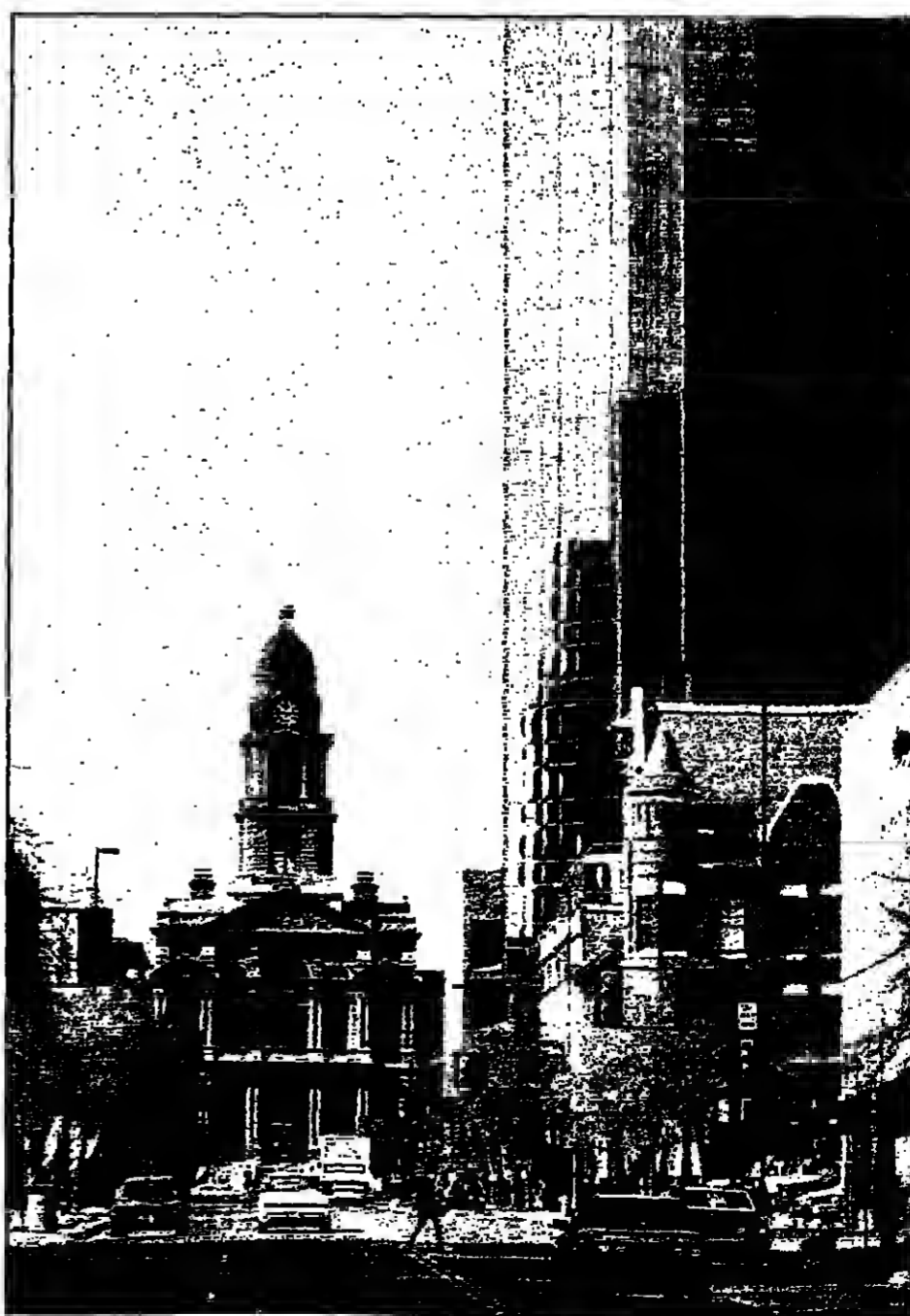
There are still hints of Fort Worth's cowboy heritage everywhere – after all, Texans are proud of their home-grown

culture, if a little desperate for it to diversify. In the historic Stockyards, the Wild West is neatly corralled and tamed for easy consumption. Next to Billy Bob's, a genuine rodeo is held every weekend at the Cowtown Coliseum, and real cowboys and cowgirls shop at Leddy's Boots and Saddles on the main drag. "Got any in red? It's my lucky colour!" croaks an old-timer who was set to compete in the ring but had left her boots back home. Nearby, the spectators fill up at steak houses on two-inch thick slabs of beef that are served on hot tin plates, a force of habit after so many nights out on the open range.

Away from the Stockyards, along the drive to Dallas, the more ribald elements of Texas add a frisson to the polite rebranding of Fort Worth. Dusty shacks advertise Mild to Wild Tattoos, all your "law enforcement" needs, and, at the disreputable Hooters bar, the sign practically grins when it announces "live midget tossin' and cockfights all week".

There is no private gendarmerie to protect these outskirts of the city-state. Fort Worth has shuddered and turned its back on the unsavoury elements of its lawless past. And so the whole town is reminiscent of Frederic Remington's most unusual cowboy painting, on display in the Amon Carter Museum. Grey and static, in the winter scene two men guide their horses up to a wooden fence. They seem tired of the rough and tumble lives they have led. One man, with his hand on the gate, is ready to open the way to a more genteel way of life. Like the *Fall of the Cowboy*, Fort Worth has been through some changes, and now looks forward to a more refined future.

Getting there: the best airport is Dallas-Fort Worth, with non-stop flights from Gatwick on British Airways (0345 222111) and American Airlines (0345 789789), and in summer from Manchester on American



These days, culture and cowboys alike inhabit Fort Worth

RHPL

JP 11/10/150

48 hours ... in Miami

Beat the blues of a British winter with a weekend in the luxurious heart of South Beach. By Jon Winter



Miami Beach - where the tans are perfect and even the buildings look good

Lunch on the run
Here's a theory: a restaurant's appeal is directly proportional to the number of tans on its patio. If this is your rationale, you'll not be disappointed if you opt for lunch at **Van Dyke Café** (846 Lincoln Road and Jefferson Street). Lunchtime here sees a buzzing crowd of South Beach locals and tourists spilling outside on to the sidewalk. Choose from an extensive brunch menu, pasta, grills, sandwiches and fresh fruit juices finished off with a slice of Key Lime pie. The location also offers great taxidermy and general people-watching opportunities as gym-goers skate past, fashion photo-shoots wander by and locals bask in the sun. It's got the smallest-cute-pooch stakes. It also has live jazz nightly until 2am.

Cultural afternoon
Bring yourself back into the wider world with a visit to the **Holocaust Memorial**. Located on the corner of Dade Boulevard and Meridian Avenue, visitors walk around and through sculptor Kenneth Treister's elaborate memorial rather than simply stand and stare at it. At its centre, the huge forearm of a dying person reaches out of the ground with a tangle of desperate concentration camp victims endeavouring to climb up it. We may all know the story, but this is the kind of place where you find yourself impulsively reading the inscriptions in full.

Collier Park



Score some time to visit the beach sun, beachside

Why go now?
For blue skies, a fine stretch of sand and the shameless vanity of life on this slender sandbar, three miles out across Biscayne Bay from mainland Miami. A fashion industry hot-spot, this is where tans are perfect, butts are firm and everything vies for your appreciative attention, even the candy-coloured buildings. It may be a little narcissistic, but embrace that old cliché "it's a beach" and you'll love the place, although probably not as much as it loves itself.

Beam Down
Even though **Laker Airways** has tried and failed twice on the Gatwick-Miami route, there is still plenty of competition. From Gatwick, non-stop on **American Airlines** (0345 789789) and **British Airways** (0345 222111); from Heathrow, non-stop on **British Airways** and **Virgin Atlantic** (01293 747747). Fares are as low as £220 return before Easter, but will rise substantially after that.

Get your bearings
The easiest way to get to South Beach from Miami International Airport is by **Super Shuttle**. You won't have to wait long for one of these bright blue vans to appear in the underpass right outside baggage reclaim. At \$11 (around £7) plus a tip, the fixed fare to South Beach may be more expensive than the elusive public buses, but they offer the luxury of a door-to-door service. Take a business card before you get out and remember to book your return **Super Shuttle** 24 hours before (305 871 2000 x4). At the beach itself, you'll need no more than this map to find your way around.

Bracing Brunch
Join the body-conscious beach crowd for a post-workout power drink to set yourself up for the day. Try the **53.50 Raspberry Rhapsody** at **South Beach Smoothie**, (1229 Washington Ave 001 305 531 5633), an energising blend of Bananas, Raspberries, skim milk, protein, amino acid activators, turbinado and mega powder. Or there's the **Smoothie King** (1525 Alton Road 001 305 672 6595) and the **Hollywood Juice Bar** (704 Lincoln Rd 001 305 538 8988).

Icing on the cake
Watching the volleyball in **Lumina Park** when the sun disappears behind the streamlining facade of the Deco district. The last rays of daylight seem to linger here, reflected off the broad expanse of sand in a magical warm-pink glow stained at the edges by coloured neon lights of Ocean Drive. Under this extraordinary light South Beach looks like no other place on earth.

Take a ride
In-line skates are the preferred way to get around South Beach. It all looks like good fun, especially along the smooth promenade running adjacent to the sand. Look around, however, and you won't see any clumsy beginners, only trim, tanned, barely-covered bodies gliding effortlessly by. By all means have a go, but if you fear it could all end in calamitous Frank Spencer scenes, stick to two wheels and tow the foam on a bike instead. Skate and bike hire costs \$5 per hour or \$15 a day (around £3 and £10) at **Super Skates**, (Washington Ave and 14th - about half the price of hire at the numerous huts along the beach).

Check in
The heart of the Deco District (Ocean Drive between 5th and 14th Street) is the obvious place to stay. Favourite among the beachfront hotels is the **Pelican** (826 Ocean Drive, 001 305 673 1473), created by Diesel years with the help of Swedish designer, Maynard Eklund. The strictly Deco exterior belies a fabulously kitsch interior with 25 themed rooms including, among others, the Psychedelic room. Shaws and stripes and the Tazman You Van. Prices from \$160 (£103). Discount beachfront accommodation can be arranged at the **tourist office** (1800 Collins Avenue) which offers up to 40 per cent off the walk-in rate on some of the Ocean Drive Deco hotels, but good value can also be found a block or two back from the beach. Two clean and friendly establishments worth noting are the **Riviera Apart Hotel** (1424 Collins Avenue, 001 305 531 3488, e-mail riviera1@aol.com) and **Villa Paradise** (1415 Collins Avenue, 001 305 532 0616, e-mail villap@att.net). Budget travellers should head for **Clay Hotel** and **International Hostel** which offers well-located dorm-style accommodation for \$13 (£8) a night. Although not particularly homey, the Clay's international popularity makes it a great place for solo travellers to make new friends.

An aperitif
It is not so much what you drink, but where you drink it. If you want to mingle with models, try and bag your way into the **Living Room** (on the Strand 671 Washington Avenue, 001 305 532 2340). If you get past the doorman, head for the VIP lounge where a gelish will present you with a bottle of Absolut, a bucket of ice and a pitcher of cranberry juice. Alternatively, if that sounds like your worst nightmare, head for the **Abbey Brewing Company** (1115 16th Street at Alton Road, 001 305 538 8110) for a wide range of no-nonsense beers including their own microbrews on tap. Chances are, though, you will end up joining the crowd swilling 55 beers and listening to some great live music in the trash, but entertaining bars along Ocean Drive.



Even Lifeguard Stations come in designer pastels

Take a hike
Check for Gallery Walks listed in the arts section of Miami's excellent free paper, **New Times**. Organised every second Saturday of the month, these social perambulations focus around the galleries and studios along Lincoln Road. There is plenty to occupy an unaccompanied afternoon wandering through this pedestrianised mall though, noting around the galleries and in open studios where you can watch some of the artists at work. Visitors are encouraged to take something home under the Art To Go scheme which keeps prices under a \$1000. One of the more unusual buys are the works of courtyard artist, Shirley Henderson. Her rusted-on-paper portraits (in display include: "US v Paul Martinez - opening argument", "Manuel Antonio Noriega" and "Haitian boat people 1992").

A spot of sun worship
Although ethnically and religiously diverse, the people of South Beach unite in their worship of the sun. Most days, a large congregation gathers along the miles of sand to bathe in the golden rays, play beach games and swim in the turquoise water. Part-time sun worshippers from the UK are welcome among the throngs, although it is worth noting that different social groups tend to congregate in specific areas. At the southern end of the beach between South Pointe and 5th Avenue you will find the surfers. It is also the area that Latin American families prefer, so topless bathing is likely to cause offence here. From 5th to around 14th Street is the most crowded with the young, fit and tanned, and the gay beach is focused around 12th, opposite The Palace Bar and Grill. Nude bathing is permitted north of Miami Beach, on Haulover Beach.

A walk in the park
For a bit of greenery, head for **South Pointe Park** at the very tip of the peninsula. Narrowly saved from the ravages of developers who have thrown up some absurdly disproportionate condominium blocks at this end of the beach, the park makes a pleasant alternative to sand on a sunny afternoon. It is popular with families and alfresco diners, but you will have to arrive early to get a pitch at one of the purpose-built barbecue sites. If you are not picnicking, the **South Pointe Seafood House and Brewing Company** offers fine dining away from the hustle, bustle and traffic of Ocean Drive. The park also has an observation tower with enough elevation to survey the city and watch oversized cruise ships slipping in and out of the Port of Miami through Government Cut.



End up in one of the beach but fun bars along Ocean Drive

All photos by Jon Winter

GLOBAL AGENDA

Valencia
The arrival of spring means the lively, week-long **Fallas** festival to Valencians, a celebration that has its roots in the times when craftsmen discarded and burnt candle-holders they no longer needed as the days became longer. Huge papier-mâché sculptures - often effigies of politicians and other public figures - are constructed, paraded in processions and then burnt in bonfires at the climax of the festival. Throughout the week, prizes are awarded for the most elaborate and outrageous designs, while daily fireworks displays are the precursor to an extravagant and gunpowder-fuelled finale. **Valencia, Spain** (00 34 963 510 417 for details) from Monday to Friday, free

Dubai
More than 2,300 retail outlets will be participating in this year's **Dubai Shopping Festival**, which has been organised around the theme of "The Family Get-Together of the Millennium". As well as the myriad goods and services on offer at reduced rates - including special deals on travel and baggage allowances - there will be children's events, raffles, film festivals, fashion shows,



street theatre and other entertainment. And, as an added attraction, the **Dubai World Cup**, which has a £2.5m purse, takes place slap-bang in the middle of the proceedings, on 28 March. **Dubai, United Arab Emirates** (00 971 4 219 065 for details) from Thursday to 14 April

Lyon
The French painter **Raoul Dufy** is well-known for his depictions of boat races and racetrack meetings. His vibrant colours pick out the fashionable clothing of the racegoers that his friend, the dress designer **Paul Poiret**, suggested he study. But Dufy

also worked with textiles and ceramics, and the retrospective at **Lyon's Musée des Beaux-Arts** includes examples of this work, as well as watercolours, drawings and engravings, with a view to illustrating the diversity of his art. The exhibition, which includes pieces never shown before in public, will also be at **Barcelona's Picasso Museum** from 29 April until 11 July. **Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon**, 20 place des Terreaux, France (00 33 472 10 1740) to 18 April, closed Tues, admission FF25

Dublin
It's St Patrick's Day next Wednesday and Dublin's festival (pictured) is now Ireland's biggest annual celebration. This year, it marks the official start to the country's millennium festivities, which means that the street theatre, fireworks, parades and music and dance should be more extravagant than before - and it's going to be non-stop partying from now until next January. We are told to "expect the unexpected" and to "prepare for the weird". **Throughout Dublin, Ireland** (details, 00 353 1 1550 824 324) from today to Wednesday **SHARON GETTINGS**

24-HOUR ROOM SERVICE: THE DELANO, SOUTH BEACH, MIAMI

BEHIND AN immaculately manicured hedge lies the Delano, arguably the most chic of the many Art Deco slabs in South Beach. Owned by Ian Schrager (the man behind the **Paradise** and **Royalton** in New York, the **Mondrian** in Los Angeles and, soon, four hotels in London), the Delano caters for the traveller for whom a perfectly mixed **Cosmopolitan** is more important than a free shoeshine kit.

A typical day may see **Kate Moss** in the lounge, **Yasmin Le Bon** and her daughters in the pool and a smattering of Hollywood starlets around the bar. The garden area even has giant mirrors propped against trees. How convenient. Despite all this celebrity-spotting, the real star is the hotel itself. The public areas are calm and beautifully furnished, with oversized sofas, elegant bar stools and discreet **chaises-longues**. There is a "kitchen" complete with a long, communal breakfast table and a half-inside, half-outside dining area. The **Blue Door**, that offers everything from simple, grilled fish to mounds of fries. (A tip from Ms Moss

herself, order the children's portions; they're big enough, and cheaper.) It could be argued that all these beautiful people (including the staff) make lying beside the gleaming sofa a bit, well, intimidating. Not true: the posers are too self-interested to notice. The Delano is a great base for trawling the architecture, brilliant second-hand shops and night-life along Miami Beach. That is, if you can drag yourself away from the cocktails, beauty treatments, delicious food and sheer relaxation of the hotel.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION
The Delano is at 1685 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida 33139 (00 1 305 672 2000 or fax 00 1 305 532 0099). Time to Miami International airport: about 40 minutes at busy times of day, but you can pass the time peering at the marinas and waterside homes of the rich and famous.

ARE YOU LYING COMFORTABLY?
If your idea of comfort is a nice chintzy pillow and pot-pourri, don't even check in. The rooms are white-on-white minimalism, which probably explains why



guests even wear their shades inside. Rooms range from sleek, if small, standard to penthouse suites and two-storey poolside "cottages". These have balconies and double-height outdoor linen curtains that a cute bellboy draws each evening at 8pm. Beds: Super-wide, with crisp white duvets and pillows. And the sofas in the cottages are large enough for an extra body to bed down in. Freebies: At first glance, pretty minimal, but behind a cabinet door you'll find a mini-kitchen complete with an "ironic" snack selection - Cheeto's, corn chips and Hershey chocolate. A brushed steel wall-sconce holds a fresh green apple with the legend "An apple a day keeps the doctor away", and the lotions and potions in the bathroom beat anything at Boots. Bathroom: White, natch. A free-standing bath with all-around

shower curtain took a bit of getting used to, but it's clean and efficient, and a small plumbing problem was dealt with within five minutes of a call to maintenance.

KEEPING IN TOUCH
TV: The cottages have two: one up, one down - and they are cased in white to match the decor. All US channels are accessible (and compulsive) and videos are also available. Radio: As above, and as befits a groovy young hotel, there are also two CD-players. The volume goes really high, too. Phone/Fax/Internet: Faxes are delivered on the hour from reception. Newspapers: Your choice is delivered to the room and a discerning choice of papers, magazines and books is on sale in the hotel shop.

THE BOTTOM LINE
A standard city-view double room costs \$345 (£220) per room per night. If you want a partial view of the ocean, a double room will cost \$395 (£253) and a full ocean view will cost \$450 (£290). A poolside "cottage" costs \$975 (£625) per night and sleeps up to four people. I'm not paying that: See Jon Winter's advice above. **LISA MARKWELL**

Voice

THE INDEPENDENT

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to respond to any ad. Calls cost
the normal BT premium rate of
£1 per minute at all timesWomen
seeking
men

PRETTY WOMAN
Interested in law, seeking
tall, dark and handsome
white male barrister, 29-39,
who's caring, romantic, to
share his interest in law
with for friendship/relationship.
Reading in London area.
25550

MAN WITH QUALITIES
Unconventional and
controversial female, late
40s, tall, slim, N/S, intel-
lectual, interested in profes-
sion, enjoys outdoors, seeks
tall professional male gradu-
ate, emotionally literate, 45-
55, Black/Chinese. 25550

SOUTH DEVON
Fertile brunette, youthful,
friendly, 30, enjoys sunbathing,
travel, literature, art, food,
coastal walks, seeks every-
thing, educated, slim, some-
time male, 50-55, probably
one who cooks. 25535

SHAMROCK LASS
Single Irish female, early
30s, professional, down-to-
earth, West Midlands based,
understanding, sincere,
Christian values, into di-
ners, sport, music, relaxing,
seeks similar man. 25521

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP
Attractive female, 35-45,
5'4", intelligent, deep blue
eyes, GSOH, aquarist, soli-
tary, enjoys classical music,
interested in meditation
and spirituality, theatre,
story-telling, beautiful coun-
tryside, travel, languages,
interior design, seeks sensi-
tive, attractive, professional
man, 38-48, for special
friendship/relationship.
London. 25540

WANT A REAL WOMAN?
Do you think beautiful
babes are two dimensional
and lardies are too much?
Well, aged 30-40, with
looks, fitness and depth,
sought by desirable female,
for fun and good friendship.
Anglo. 25530

COME INTO MY LIFE
Tall, fit, fair, slim female, 43,
youthful in mind and body,
seeks tall, dark-skinned or
black male for friendship,
relationship and to cherish.
Cambs. 25545

SEEMS DANCER
American expat, 40, acade-
mic and writer, over the
seamy divorce, seeking a
similar male, with a sense of
the ridiculous, brains and an
affectionate heart. London.
25521

SEEKING SHI GALAHAD
Wonderful man wanted -
rich, bright, with a GSOH,
tall, sought of thing, for
studies enjoyment. 25528

ROMANCE
Tall, fair, slim female, 55,
warm-hearted, adventurous,
intelligent, likes nature, world,
arts, travel, growing, possi-
ble, seeks male, 50-60,
who has time for extended
visits to the South Coast,
Reading based. 25569

SEEKS SOUL MATE
Jazzy, bubbly, 38, 5'8",
economist/PH student,
mature, into chess,
volleyball, driving and danc-
ing, seeks taller, well-mind-
ed, professional male gradu-
ate, aged 35-40, no lies, for
romantic friendship. Turkish
speaker preferred. North or
central London area. 25573

BEAUTY IN DEVONSHIRE
Attractive, beautiful woman,
40, seeks opposite sex, 45-55,
art, life and all it entails.
25596

WEST PENNINES LADY
With attitude, seeks N/S male
friend, 65-75, to share
interest in the arts and meta-
physics. GSOH and a kind
and honest nature essential.
25459

LOOKING FOR ENRICHMENT
Attractive, slim, petite, affec-
tionate, intelligent woman,
enjoys most things in life,
seeks tallish man, 45-55,
who's warm and sensitive.
SW London. 25574

CREATIVE SOUL MATE
Funky, arty, warm, playful,
blonde female, 52, loves cin-
ema, jazz, art, seeks confi-
dence, N/S man, for a rela-
tionship. North London area.
25552

WARM AND SENSITIVE
Attractive female, 45, 5'7",
blonde hair, big blue eyes,
fun to be with, based in
Surrey. 25544

HEY, GENTLEMAN, 60-70
You should realise that you're
missing. Attractive, vivacious,
educated lady, seeking an unattached,
interesting, warm-hearted
man. I'm great fun, a good
conversationalist and I make
excellent coffee. NW
Manchester. 25544

ATTRACTIVE
Slim, fair, funny lady, seeks
gentleman, 50ish, warm,
fun, special, with lovely
home, property, who enjoys
dining out, theatre, travel
etc. London/South area pre-
ferred. 25549

EMPTY ROOMS
Intelligent, blonde single
man, 5'8", slim build, gradu-
ate, enjoys science fiction,
rock music, offbeat humour,
politics, animals, home life,
seeking a deep-thinking,
relaxed, 35-45 for a
fusion of minds. South
Wales or anywhere. 25562

ORIENTAL SPICE
Pleasant lady, 42, widow, one
child, honest and sincere,
seeking N/S, tall, sincere
and caring man, with 40-50,
GSOH, must be employed for
friendship and possible
relationship. 25767

ROMANTIC GRADUATE REQUIRED
Lady graduate, 40s, firm, no
ties, enjoys country walks,
winning, dining, watersports,
travel, theatre, dancing,
good conversation, living on
the South Coast, seeking a
tall, educated, slimish
gent, under 52, non-smoker,
for a relationship. 25498

WARM WOMAN
Female, 52, seeking a warm
guy, Sheffield. 25497

AQUARIAN
Female, 38, 5'8", dark
auburn hair, brown eyes,
seeks tall, 40-50, GSOH,
and a belief in astrology,
books, friends and good
food, seeking a similar, profes-
sional male, Oxford area.
25525

MAD MARCH HARE
Female, 30, enjoys country-
side, Africa, cinema, laugh-
ter, seeks tall, 40-50, GSOH,
and a belief in astrology,
books, friends and good
food, seeking a similar, profes-
sional male, Oxford area.
25525

ARE YOU...
Tall, 5'10", 50ish, adre-
naline to north Bucks, but
not fanatic, sensitive and
humorous? If you like to
walk, talk, play and have an
eye or two, this article and
looking woman, needs
some thing. 25531

MAN WANTED
Lively, intelligent, friendly
female, 24, with strong
Christian faith, into youth
work, pubs, nursing, seeking
a man who makes her
laugh and isn't wussy.
Cardiff area. 25506

FORMER JUNEBOOSE BEAUTY
Now slightly faded, to attrac-
tive gentleman, 57, seek-
ing a true male friend, with
GSOH, to share theatre,
music, travel, metaphysics
and a belief in astrology. NW
Manchester. 25517

WARM AND WITTY
Attractive, interesting and
sensitive female, 40s, into
music, countryside, seeking
a tall, interesting male, 40-
55, no lies, with a GSOH,
and a belief in astrology.
Bristol/South. 25459

SEEKING SOUL MATE
Fertile black woman, slim
build, theatre, books, good
food, keeping fit, seeking a
male, 35-45, GSOH, for
companionship, for a rela-
tionship/relationship. N/S
preferred. 25521

LANCELOT...
The Lady of the Lake
seeking a knight, 40-50, fit,
warm, bright, intelligent,
attractive, widowed, seeks
tall, slim, fit, gallant, special
eyes, 40-50, for a
long-term relationship. Near
London preferably. 25516

TAURINEAN SCOT
Pleasant, attractive, taurinean
woman, enjoys world travel,
books, art, good wine and
flowers, seeking a soul
mate, 50-60, with N/S
interests, located in NW
England. 25529

NORFOLK DIVA
Independent, hard-working,
professional woman, mid-
40s, sometimes speaking,
seeking new male friend, to
share city and country pleas-
ure and a laugh with. No
old money. 25528

POLISHED FLOWER
Intelligent, vegetarian
female, 37, N/S, seeks kind,
gentle, sensitive, non-judge-
mental Christian man, with
GSOH, for friendship, possi-
ble relationship, evenings out
and fun. 25456

INVESTIGATE LONDON
From 19, N/S, seeks kind,
mature, bookish, female,
37, leading complicated life,
seeks straightforward rela-
tionship, with chap, 40+.
25523

WEST LONDON
Tall, slim, fit, attractive, inde-
pendent, professional
female, 45ish, likes most
outdoor sports, cooking,
concerts, theatre and smoky
wine bars, seeking an intel-
ligent, fun-loving and gen-
erous, career-minded male,
for a possible relationship.
25547

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP
Good-looking female, just
40, 5'4", GSOH, light
brown/blond, self-employed,
likes classical music, story
telling, theatre, travel, arts,
horse riding, sailing, sports,
seeks like-minded man, also
seeking a special friend-
ship/relationship. London.
25540

STRONG, SOMETIMES VULNERABLE
Responsibly hedonistic,
attractive, fit, thoughtful, pro-
fessional female, 33, seek-
ing a similar male, 32-40.
25562

MAD FOR IT!
Mad, happy girl, 20, 5'7",
smoker, fun-loving, enjoys
dancing and chilling out, seek-
ing funny, handsome bloke,
25-35, with similar interests,
for friendship and maybe
more. 25525

WANTED: ONE MAN
Cheerful, friendly teacher,
24, seeking a caring, active
male, 25-35, who likes rock-
n-roll, music and can make
me laugh. Northampton.
25507

CHRISTIAN LADY
Female, 25, 5'3", auburn
hair, blue eyes, GSOH, N/S,
enjoys eating in or out, cine-
ma, bowling and having fun,
seeks N/S, attractive, caring
decent Christian, 25-34,
with similar interests and
GSOH. West Midlands.
25481

MAN FRIDAY
Attractive, 27, enjoys
conversations, theatre,
music, cinema and good
food, is seeking an honest,
caring male, aged 26-33, for
new adventures. London
based. 25539

HOLDING OUT
Intelligent, attractive, slim,
bubbly blonde, 30, 5'4",
seeks slim, handsome,
intelligent, sincere, honest,
successful, professional
white gentleman, 27-35, 6',
athletic build, for happiness
and long-term relationship.
Herts/Bucks area preferred.
25511

WILL YOU BE MINE?
Very pretty, early 30s,
5'9", black hair, brown eyes,
well-built, enjoys going out,
sailing out, films, seeking a
similar male, for friendship, possi-
bly more. 25546

SPRING THOUGHT
Man, 49, mildly hairy, rail-
ish, tall, slim, N/S, seeks
female to try and recapture
"that first, fine, carefree mo-
ment". East Midlands/any-
where. 25548

LIFE'S WHAT YOU MAKE IT
Handsome, witty male, 32,
into cinema, theatre, art,
seeks female, 30-45, for
friendship, possibly more.
25566

EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL
Cheerful N/S professional,
40s, GSOH, into fun, read-
ing, classical, country walks,
old book shops, outdoor
sports, seeks female, 30-45,
for friendship, possibly more.
25580

ATTRACTIVE, TALL, GENT...
40, well educated, travel-
led and sincere, enjoys art,
literature, rock and opera,
seeks female, 30-45, for
friendship, possibly more.
25583

TRAVELLING MAN
Tall, fit male, 40, with motor
bike, into fun, reading, profes-
sional, seeking a compati-
ble woman, 35-42, to enjoy
life, laughter and compari-
sons. Richmond. 25587

YOU'LL BE AMAZED!
Tall, slim, well-read, profes-
sional, sincere, kind female,
with GSOH. Seeking is
believing - I'm wicked and
fun and I'm seeking a man.
Bristol. 25570

SEEKING MILLENIUM MAN
Attractive, blonde-based
female, 38, into tennis, danc-
ing, cinema, theatre, seeks
decent guy, who's interest-
ing, lively and reasonably
career-minded, to enjoy life
and laugh with. 25531

ATTRACTIVE PROFESSIONAL
Fun, serious, considered,
reliable female, 27, with
GSOH, enjoy dining in or out,
music, singing, theatre, you
name it I try it. I'm seeking a
special man to enhance my
life. London. 25511

ONION FIELDS
Divorced male, 40, 6', no
ties, seeks white, profes-
sional, sincere woman, for
something special. South
London. 25508

DOUBLE TROUBLE
Two good-looking men, 23,
GSOH, seeking two slim,
attractive, older women, to
share nights out and in. 25581

SWIFT SURRENDER
Very attractive, very domi-
nant male, 25, seeks loving,
submissive female, 18-35 for
fun, friendship and love? 25549

EASYGOING
Male, 32, non-materialistic
professional, enjoys country-
side, music, guitar playing,
sailing, going out, conversa-
tion and keep-fit, is seeking
a similar caring, thoughtful
and attractive female.
Yorkshire area. 25467

MATURE BRIGHTONIAN
Septuagenarian, seeks
thoughtful, intelligent lady, to
share his love of concerts,
ballroom dancing and coun-
try walks. Brighton based.
25549

GENUINE MALE
Good-looking male, 19,
enjoys cinema, sports etc.,
seeking a white female, 18-
25, for fun, friendship, possi-
bly leading to a relationship.
25464

BYPASSING IN NEWBURY...
...30-something, somehow
male, pragmatic, romantic,
cynical idealist, accidentally
solvent and stumbling
towards maturity, would wel-
come an intelligent, tolerant
female companion, to share
triumph, tragedy and in be-
tween. Berks. 25564

HANDSOME AND GENUINE
City professional, 31, 6'
N/S, athletic build, seeking
attractive, slim female, 5'6",
N/S, with caring soul for
friendship & romance.
London. 25452

PYROMANAC SEEKS MATCH
Male, mid-30s, slim, fit and
active, seeking a similar
female, for who knows
what? Beds/Herts/Bucks
area. 25531

ORIGINAL MATERIAL
Creative graduate male,
aged 31, seriously into
songwriting, music, cinema,
poetry and people, is seek-
ing a witty, fascinating
female, for fun, friendship
and inspiration. Tyneside
area. 25530

SINGLE WHITE MALE
Genuine SE London guy,
40, 5'11", own home, no
ties, solvent, into country-
side, sailing and sailing,
seeks slim/mid-weight
gentle girlfriend. 25588

ATTRACTIVE ARCHITECT
Interior designer, early 30s,
5'10", slim build, green eyes,
likes music, creativity, loves
children, seeking a fit, slim,
fun, attractive and creative
female, similar age and val-
ues, to settle down with.
London and surrounding
areas. 25533

CONTINENTAL PROFESSIONAL
Central London/Geneva
based, attractive, warm,
talkative, cuddly lady, 50ish, for
fun, friendship, travel, the-
atre and more. 25588

ASIAN BOUGHT
Tall, slim, intelligent, roman-
tic, educated male, 36,
sailing, travel, reading, cine-
ma, music and more, seek-
ing an attractive, educated,
Asian female, for friend-
ship, maybe more. 25537

LIKES A LAUGH
Young male, 31, cultured,
diverse, amusing, active,
seeks female, 28-33, for
friendship, romance and a
family. Flg ma and I'll make
you smile. Bath. 25583

IF YOU'RE LOOKING...
For a lady who has love to give.
Humorous, professional
male, 5'11", slim build, big
baka, house in Oxford, likes
vegetarian food, plus
music, socialising. You want
more? 25505

EDINBURGH BASED
Single, well-built male, 32,
5'10", blonde/brown, N/S,
cinema, restaurants, shop-
ping, pubs, clubs, swimming,
seeking female, 24-32,
GSOH, for friendship and
more. 25529

TOWN/COUNTRY HOUSE
Quiet weekend house, offered to
stressed, slim, professional
Londoner aged 40-45, by
handsome, romantic, slightly
mad guy. South Wales
based. 25478

CALL ME
Professional chap, 39, 6'4",
is seeking a lady, to share
friendship, hints and a love
of the countryside. London,
Bucks or Northants area.
25521

MANCHESTER MAN
Broad shouldered, honest,
reliable, nice rose m/j. I
seeks interesting female,
20+, with varied interests.
25509

CUDDLY OLDER WOMAN?
Honest and dependable,
quite shy, caring country lad,
37, dark hair, seeks a
outwardly conventional,
latter-figured lady, 45-50,
with a sense of the ridicu-
lous, to share a friendship.
NW. 25523

SWEETNESS
Tender, loving, attractive,
confident and kind male, 28,
seeking a female, possi-
bly more, for friendship,
romance and lasting love.
25595

EXOTIC ADVENT
Kind, sensitive, kind, honest,
reliable, attractive male, 32,
5'7", dark hair, seeks a
special, understanding, exot-
ic lady, 20-40, any national-
ity, to spend some time with.
London or Midlands area.
25520

DIST PEPSI MAN
Musician, writer and lecturer,
early 40s, slim, with own
hair/vibe, seeks female
soul mate, to share city
society, city breaks and wild
time. Brighton. 25572

SINGLE WHITE MALE
Warm, witty, fit, solvent, edu-
cated male, 32, seeking a
similar lady, to share city
society, city breaks and wild
time. Brighton. 25572

HONEST AND HANDSOME
Graduate, 38, 5'11", solvent,
successful in his arts, loves
outdoors, the sea, friends
and good conversation
(sometimes silly, sometimes
serious), aesthetically inclined,
slim guy, under 40,
London. 25418

FEISTY, HIGH HEEL LADY...
30-something, who's a
walk. Are you seeking a
domestic companion, who
doesn't just talk the talk?
Then I'm the attractive
male, 39, 25594

LOOKING FOR SOUL MATE
Attractive, mature, blonde
female, 48, with blue eyes,
transsexual, wicked SOH,
seeking a bisexual male, for
friendship and possibly
more. Manchester. 25597

LOOKING FOR YOU
Sexual/gay female, aged
25-35, sought by bisexual
guy, 30, 5'11", professional,
attractive, blonde, adhe-
re to build, for friendship and
possibly more. Midlands based.
25519

SUNSHINE COAST
Tall, slim, blonde male, 48,
with decent looks, seeks
similar man, for fun, friend-
ship, outdoor pursuits and
sport. 25517

WITTY
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ship, outdoor pursuits and
sport. 25517

WITTY
30

MODERN MANNERS: YOUR CUT-OUT-AND-KEEP GUIDE TO SURVIVING THE MINEFIELD

Dear Serena

Dear Serena,
Don't smoke, don't drink, don't drive
and have a relatively high
ome, and am feeling guilty that I'm
making enough of a contribution
he exchequer. What should I do?
Gordon, Westminster

to every effort to ensure that you
I have children. That way, at least
I miss out on one of your tax
wances. Oh, and don't talk too freely
ut these feelings you have, as other
-earners might spread rumours
ut your suitability to be numbered
ng them.

Dear Serena,
I lived with my partner for three
rs, and we dated for a year or so
ore that. Before we moved in
ther I bought her a kitten, Nabila.
I present. She is now a three-and-
alf-year-old cat and we've recently
lised that she's pretty much all we
e to common any more. So,
easily, we've decided to call it a
and I'm going to move out. The

problem is that I can't bear the
thought of leaving Nabila behind. My
ex feels the same way about her, and
though we've been civilised up to this
point, we are in danger of total
breakdown over this issue. Can you
suggest a compromise?
Mike, Glastonbury

Sorry, Mike, but I can't. As you say, you
bought Nabila as a present for your ex,
and she is, however painful it is for you,
her property. In so far as a cat can
belong to anyone. If you try to fight this,
you risk total alienation from the two of
them, and won't be able to negotiate
visiting rights or a position as chief
babysitter when your ex goes on
holiday, away on business etc. I know
that this is a sad situation for you,
though perhaps you are partly
sublimating your feelings about the loss
of the relationship in this issue?

The best thing you can do for yourself
is, once you are settled in your new
home, to go out and get a kitten of your
own. You may think that no cat can
replace Nabila, and it's probably true;

but after a few weeks
playing with a bundle
of fur and springs
you may well find
that your heart
starts to swell with
affection again.

Dear Serena,
Help! I've forgotten
Mothering Sunday! What do
I do?
Edward, Sandringham

I guess you'll have to go
along with the old girl's
guest list for the wedding
now, Eddie.

Dear Serena,
My wife has a well-
paid career, and when
the children came
along we decided that
I would take care of
them. We are
extremely happy with
this arrangement; my

wife has always regarded
her career as precious,
and I have discovered all
sorts of elements to my
personality that I enjoy
and value. The problem,
though, is this: when I
collect my six-year-old
from school and the four-
year-old from kindergarten,
I get cold-shouldered by all
the nuns at the school gates.
I think, to begin with, that some
of them thought I was a stray
pervert, but they all know who I
am now, and still don't seem to
want anything to do with me.

How do I break into this
magic circle? It seems
as hard as breaking
through that glass
ceiling that women
are always
complaining about.
Mark, Chelmsford

Yes, it's an odd one, this,
and I can understand how

frustrating it must be that women,
having taken such great strides into the
bastions of masculinity, seem so
reluctant to cede space to men in their
traditional pursuits. As you know from
your experience with your wife, by no
means all women feel this way, but it's
surprising how many still act out
prejudices against child-rearing men.

This, however, has to change and,
sadly, the only person who can do it is
you. Women won the right to be in the
workplace by proving that they could do
the jobs, and you have to do the same.
Try involving yourself in school
activities. This is one of the ways that,
from time immemorial, women have
broken down the difficulties of moving
to a new area. If time is too tight for
regular commitments, try asking your
children who their best friends are and
establishing contact with their parents.
And never forget the social importance
of the birthday party. Someone who has
had a glass of wine and a crisp or two
when coming to pick their child up is
going to be hard-pressed to ignore you
at the school gates the next day.

Dear Serena,
Can you suggest suitable attire for a
wedding in Australia?
Perry and Lucia, Bournemouth

The traditional garb: shorts, boots and a
tinnie for the men, print dress and fright
wig for the women. Also, take a gun,
and, if a kangaroo should gallop
proceedings, don't hesitate to shoot
the buggers.

Dear Serena,
Is chrematophobia a fear of: a) game
shows, b) money, c) ageing disc-
jockeys, d) losing out in the ratings
war? Take your time.
Chris, London

I'm not sure, Chris. Can't phone a
friend?

Knotty problems with the world today?
Write to Dear Serena, The Independent,
18th Floor, 1 Canada Square, Canary
Wharf, London E14 5DL, where
they will be attended to with the
customary sympathy.



ARIES

DON'T BE discouraged by the lethargy that
suddenly underlies your brightest endeavours
(it's worse for Scorpios: they've got a double dose
of retrograde ruling planets). Though you are
tempted to believe your great purpose is rot-
ting from within, you must not give up. You of
all people know how to keep going even though
you're running on empty. Vodka is a useful
substitute for whatever you're lacking. The flesh
is willing enough, after all.

TAURUS

A MILD aspect with stern Saturn makes you
better-looking than usual. Your Venus is disci-
plined rather perversely, and threats of pain and
constriction bring out a sweetness and gener-
osity which you will thoroughly enjoy until the
credit-card bills start coming in. Don't let
money be such a problem. You never have
enough not to do, and then you can't spend it.
Beware depression. Wallowing around
listening to Paul Simon songs is not the answer.

GEMINI

YOUR CONVICTION that you are in the right has
never been more convincing. Energy springs
eternal, ideas proliferate, work can't depress you,
and nor can your friends. You will decide to
change things irrevocably, in the absence of any
objective analysis, the results are purely down
to chance (the odds are, obviously, against you).
When the Sun is doing this to your Mercury, you
may overload and blow a circuit. You will go
gloriously, but do you want to go at all?

CANCER

THE ADVENTURE that is waiting for you is not
geographical but emotional. You are to be taken
out of yourself, not out of your country. Of course,
the time must be right, and conditions evolve
mysteriously, but those close to you may be
covertly collaborating in what you think are your
secret plans (so secret, you may not yet be aware
of them yourself). A reverie may provide clues
to your future behaviour. You must just follow
your impulse or your instinct.

LEO

YOU DON'T deserve it, but here it is anyway. Your
social profile will balloon like the spinnaker on
a racing boat, your influence will transcend your
business, your optimism will survive impossible
situations, and you will be happy. More than that,
your complete lack of objectivity will lead you
into impossible situations which you will
dominate. Yes, you're lucky as well as everything
else. This will make your colleagues and
competitors spit with frustration (but everyone
will see and be disgusted).

VIRGO

IT'S NOT often you enjoy such a rush of energy
- this must be what drugs are like, you think.
But these astro-amphetamines are dangerous
in so far as they fill you with a sense of om-
nipotence, omniscience and infallibility. You, least
of anyone in the zodiac, have a right to such
feelings. But you will be useful to depressed
friends while you feel like this. Their gratitude
should be banked early. You will be better off in
Manhattan, especially while fares are cheap.

LIBRA

YOU FIND yourself a little steadier than normal,
but don't be alarmed. This instinct for fidelity
and constancy is but a passing thing. However,
the influence of Saturn in your love-life adds a
sense of concentration which your partners find
thrilling. Where, in the past, you have been easily
manoeuvred, now you have a certain solidity, a
substance, and this may encourage people to get
naked and crush up against you. Don't be
tempted to look over their shoulders. There is
no one more attractive passing by.

SCORPIO

WE SHOULDN'T gloat, but powerful, graceful
Scorpio suffers from a terrific astro-pratfall. Your
two ruling planets, both of them, count them, go
retrograde this week and stay that way for
months. And if you don't know what that means,
you're going to find out in the worst way. You will
suffer from misconceptions, miscalculations,
misinformation and miscellaneous misap-
prehensions, misadventures, misappropriations,
missed turnings... Shall I go on?

SAGITTARIUS

YOUR HIGH-MINDEDNESS is useful for once,
perhaps because it has a whole new voltage
running through it. You expand your influence
into every cranny of your social life. Your
friends will be grateful for the beauty of your
advice, but only those who can see such things.
The ones who take you on trust will be amazed
at how things turn out for them. Of course it hurts
a bit at first, but only because it's getting
better, surely? Actually, no.

CAPRICORN

NOW THIS is more like it, at last - it has been
very dry, hasn't it? A veritable drought out there?
However confused Venus may be, however
strange the erotic impulses she may be becoming
up at you, you will have every chance to fulfil
them. A glorious, guiltless sexual eccentricity
is emerging in all its power and purple colour-
ing. And the relationship you create on its back
will endure. You have the dark intelligence to
see exactly what is wanted and the strength to
keep it alive.

AQUARIUS

THOSE WHO accuse you of a lack of care and
compassion should be treated very harshly. They
only want to manipulate you into acting against
your own interests. But they are clever at
administering guilt, and your exalted nature is
always vulnerable to low minds. The higher you
climb, the more easily they can see up your
skirts. A change of scene will refresh your moral
sense; some water is indicated (let's hope it's
not rain). Nakedness helps, so do not be too fussy
about whose.

PISCES

ALL THOSE creeps who said you wouldn't
manage will be proved wrong; in rage and
frustration they will turn on themselves, biting
their own butts. Bear this in mind when
satisfaction tempts you to smirk. Your love-life
should improve with your new confidence.
Appetite may substitute for desire, but at least
you are motivated. Oral skills will enhance your
reputation, but don't be conned into expensive
dentistry that you just don't need.

CLASSIC CARTOONS

MARTIN PLIMMER ON
MARTIN HONEYSETT



F BAD posture is the hallmark
of the Martin Honeysett we
see today in Private Eye or
The Oldie. It has not always
been so. This pre-1974 cartoon
reveals a trio of unexpectedly
hard-edged and vibrant
characters (even in death).
Though Honeysett's
sleazy sense of the
humorous has survived intact,
his shoulders have slumped,
his skin sagged and his
pousers filled up with gravel.
His characters move shakily
through a world in which every
day is a bad-hair day wearing

expressions of mild despair.
Often they appear to have
forgotten their teeth.
Usually, in an age of biob
figures sporting gaps,
Honeysett takes pains to
invest each of them with life-
like individual personalities. It
is not unusual to spot your own
bank manager in a Honeysett
scenario. Attractive people,
however, don't figure.
"I really don't know why," he
says. "Although friends have
told me that apparently,
cartoonists often draw
themselves. Were my friends."

PUZZLEMASTER

BY CHRIS MASLANKA

Puzzle Panel. He instinctively
understood the programme. I
didn't have to explain the func-
tion of the bad joke I put into
each programme (Q: What sort
of biscuits fly? A: Plane biscuits).
He also set his puzzle well.
Victorians used to play a word
game in which you had to
identify the word in which a
given unlikely-looking cluster
of letters could be found. Thus
XGL is found in FOXGLOVE,
and LLFR in BULLFROG.
What, he asked teasingly, about
these three clusters:

AHU
HIIH
IHU

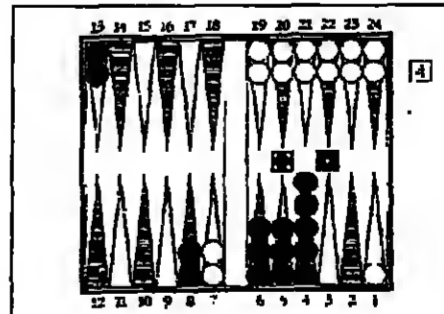


Another valued contributor to
the Puzzle is opening The Math-
ematical Mystery Tour today at
11am, at Brent Cross shopping
centre in London. Prof David
Singmaster, visiting professor of
mathematics at South Bank Uni-
versity. Until 18 March you can
meet mathematicians, try out
puzzles and see computer inter-
actives and video installations.
The tour, the brainchild of
Richard Mankiewicz, aims to
promote maths awareness by
taking it to the people. The year
2000 has been designated World
Mathematical Year by Unesco.
Despite the crucial role of maths
in modern life, few people know
what it is or what it is for, let
alone that it can be fun. Some-
thing has to be done, and
Mankiewicz is trying to do it.

Points to Ponder
Two roads were left out of the
puzzle map last week. It is
reprinted here correctly for the
sake of readers' sanity.
Uncle Tadek goes from Toms to
Omsk visiting each other town
exactly once. Show that if the
high road (BG) is not passable,
it is not possible. And even if he
visits towns more than once he
must pass through an even
number of them, unless he goes
along BE.
Answers next week.
Comments to:
tudy@puzzlemaster.co.uk

BACKGAMMON

CHRIS BRAY

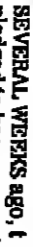


WORLD CHAMPION, Jerry
Grandell continues to be in
inspired form, winning both the
main tournament and the
Super Jackpot at the recent
Istanbul tournament. Here is a
position from his final in the
main event against Leonid
Riskin. Black (Grandell) has a
41 to play.
Whatever he does he has to
leave white a direct shot. If
white hits the shot he can
immediately win the game by
redoubling but will probably
play on for a few rolls at least,
as he will have a chance to win
a gammon. What are black's
options? They seem to be (a)
13/8 (b) 6/1 (c) 6/2, 5/4.
Move (a) can be discounted
immediately as it leaves 17
numbers that hit whereas the
other two plays both leave only

ones (11 numbers) to hit. As (b)
leaves a better structure, and
potentially gets rid of white's
troublesome man on the
1-point, it would seem that this
is much the better play and
was the one selected by
Grandell over the board.
But wait, all is not quite as it
seems. After (c) white actually
has only 9 hitting numbers. He
cannot hit with 16 as after
24/23* he would not have a
legal 6 to play. The rules of
backgammon insist that you
play as much of your roll as
possible. This difference of 9
hits against 11 is enough to
make (c) the right play - after
all, the next roll is absolutely
critical.
This type of situation crops
up more often than you would
think - watch out for it.

Channel 5

TELEVISION REVIEW



At the end of the minor project was abandoned, but this week the "Yankees" were building a golf course. Their third. "The Marquess was delighted to learn that the course will be called 'The Marquess.' The project is being marshaled by his son and heir, Lord Howard, who pool-pooled local objections to the destruction of woodland with the explanation that "the central landscape has changed since the Ice Age!" He has a rabid of prehistoric man clearing forest to create the first dogleg and fair. At the Ice-off, the community used a wooden club.

The other star of *Country House* is the parish clerk, Wendie Mills. There is nothing this woman will not stop at to get noticed on television. She poses nude

Last week's episode reported on the culling of some of Woodbury's magnificent herd of deer. The deerkeeper explained his decision to shoot one sexually-inactive old male. "The animal has had a good life in the park," he said. "It's come to the end of its time and there's no better way for it to go really. It doesn't know anything. It doesn't have the hang." Out of the mouths of deerkeepers...

As this long and intimate portrait of their daily case is broadcast, you wonder whether the Tavislocks can hear the bang. Before the fatal shot, the camera even started down the barrel of this gun, affording an astonishing new view of a social change. (The soldiers, by the way, are said to know to be ground down into apocalypses.)

The series has worked hard to spare out tensions between the idealists and the criminals. Last week, the Tavislocks wanted to create an open-cast mine, which would deposit an antidote anywhere outside the window of people to whom

for the local life class. So most of her appearances on *County House* have been conducted in the bull, apart from the time she went to the Abbey to make a video of the deer herd. She borrowed a pair of earliers from the deerkeeper's collection and dangled them to her head "so I can see what it's like to be a deer." She tried to walk her way into the herd, "with a bit of luck," she mused. "They might think I'm one of them."

At the end of last week, she had an aneurysm, and you had suspected that she had suspected it. So as not to be written out of the series. Last night, she was back, totally awakes. It's a mark of how cleverly producer Nigel Parrnell has charmed his way into the estate of Woodbury life that the estate manager told him about Wendie's Irish haemorrhoids and Parrnell then informed the Tavislocks. The result is a series so full of delightful detail that it could almost be one of Lady T's need-porners; the subtle stickwork is that subtle

LAST OF THE WINING FOLKS

film-maker Adrian Cowell has been visiting the Amazonian rainforests of Brazil for the past 30 years and has an invaluable record of the dramatic changes in the area since 1967, when an expedition entered Brazil's largest block of unexplored forest. Along with the well-known names there, diseases and pollution, and Claudio Villas Bôas, of the Indian Protection Service, was instrumental in setting up an industry to save these ancient tribespeople from extinction. And then another threat materialised. If you watch only one programme this weekend, make it this.

WITNESSES:



WFOAN / WONT- 2004

making a bit of an event of showing Matt Fuggs's Oscar-winning 1980 movie. Three other Vegas-themed movies are on the subject from this Wednesday. Does the film warrant it? The majority of critics seemed to think so, *Shifting the Odds: The Academy Award-winning performance for praise*. He plays a seared scriptwriter who hits the bourbon as he holes up in the desert gambling town. Don't expect a *Fast Times in Vegas*, however—the treatment is ultimately too sad. Truly, Elisabeth Shue plays the hooker who might just save him.

Flubber

Tonight on
SAY
the office

Channel 5

6.00 Depledge Farm (R) (9618868) **8.30 Harekzoc (R)** (5015665) **7.00 S Nawa and Sport (S)** (8063619) **Millshinkel (S)** (2598145) **7.35 Wintels House (R)** (4567874) **6.00 Lassie (R)** (S) (2617697) **8.30 Wierbon (R)** (S) (2618668) **9.00 Land of the Loal (R)** (2703346) **9.30 Kephel (R)** (S) (2620004)

5 News (S) (T) (606063394).

100 Sportaweek on 8. Gail McKenna is the sporty blonde at the front of the familiar rag-bag of Argentinian and Dutch soccer, winter sports and motorcycle supercross (S) (1733706).

other medication (H) (S) (T) (92829923),
55 B News and Sport (S) (T) (9289146).

15 Night Fever. Stugs hosts the hectic karaoke night for the "rehabilitating" "reformed" and "redemptive" gamblers who are robbing the subjects of their livelihoods (F) (S) (229a2435).

5 B News and Sport (S) **DT** (3448355)
entertainment show - joined by Emma Noble, Claudia
Winkelman, Sara McFeyers, Dean Gaffney, Shaun
Williams, Shazie Ritchie, Sam Kane and Adam Garcia
(F) (S) (9575503).

5 Fire Rescue. Philippa Forrester presents dramatic real-life footage of Britain's fire and rescue services in action in a programme which coincides with National Fire Safety Week (well, that's their excuse) (7p) (5956023).

5) **FILM** *The Return of Hunter - Everyone Walks in LA* (Bradford May 1995 US). And we never knew had even been away. "Plick Hunter" (played by Fred Dryer) was apparently on there. The

was apparently an issue I V defective, although this particular one probably passed you by. In this feature-length revival, his fiancée has been murdered and Rick suspects her ex-husband (5) (7) (8131861).

ELIM *Confessions of a Window Cleaner* Mal Guest 1974 UK. The original with Robin Askwith getting several snuff cuts as he mows the lawn.

FILM **Trial By Combat** (Kevin Connor, 1976 US). Donald Pleasence leads a secret society of modern mad-scientist knights in this lurid adventure co-starring John Mills and Barbara Hershey. (1259846).

FILM **Strayker** (Cliff H. Smith, 1981 US). Paul

TELEVISION GUIDE BY GERARD GILBERT

Flubber



tonight on
the
Doc office.

•

YOUR MONEY

PERSONAL FINANCE • SHOPPING • DESIGN • MOTORING • PROPERTY

MOTHER'S DAY: GREAT GIFTS, WITH A TWIST
SHOPPING, PAGE 10



KID'S STUFF: THE BEST DESIGNS FOR CHILDREN
DESIGN, PAGE 11



PAST MASTER: BENTLEY'S NEW 8-LITRE RACER
MOTORING, PAGE 12



The Robin Hood budget

Are you a budget winner or loser? That all depends on personal circumstances. By Nic Cicutti

Anyone brought up on a cinematic diet which included Errol Flynn in his many swash-buckling roles will have gasped in recognition as Gordon Brown stood up in the Commons this week. Here was a Chancellor of the Exchequer suddenly metamorphosed into Robin Hood, robbing the rich to help the poor. At least, that was the impression the Chancellor wanted to convey and, surrounded by his Merry Men (or rather, a baying band of Labour MPs) he gave a good approximation of Errol at his best.

How accurate is this picture? Well, it partly depends on where you are in the tax and spend firmament. But it is generally true to say that the biggest winners out of this Budget will be pensioners, particularly the less well-off, and couples with children.

Although the better-off will not gain so much and, in a few cases, they might even lose out, most of the money will come via tax receipts from falling unemployment and smaller debt interest payments. This means that, while some of Mr Brown's tax measures will impact negatively on the pockets of the middle and upper classes, these will be offset by a combination of tax cuts, including the 10 pence starting rate from 6 April, and the 1p cut in 12 months' time.

But it was the combination both of his delivery and the fact that more vulnerable groups in society were marginally more significant winners (for a change) that led John Whitting, a tax partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers, the accountancy firm, to say: "He is being quite clever in the way he disposes of his tax resources. They are clearly being concentrated to help lower-paid people, but without hitting higher-income earners too hard. I suppose he is keen to live up to his Robin Hood Chancellor image."

What are the major points of Mr Brown's Budget and how will they affect us? Well, tax and National Insurance are the obvious starting points.

According to calculations by pay and employment benefits firm Arthur Andersen, taking both NI and tax into account, a single person earning £5,000 a year will be £14.29 a month better off from April. The net gain remains at roughly that level until £25,000, rising to £22.88 for salaries of £25,000 and beyond.



Has Gordon Brown really taken from the rich to give to the poor?

A married person earning £10,000 a year and whose married couple's tax allowance is being abolished, will see a net monthly increase in salary of £7.26, rising to £15.50 on earnings above £35,000.

The problem for anyone trying to calculate whether they are net winners or losers is that it depends on a multiplicity of factors. Because the Chancellor has decided to alter a wide variety of tax measures, each case must be taken individually, such

as whether you drive a company car (ouch), how many children you have and of what age (good news), whether your income is over £35,500 (bad news, you don't get any children's tax credit). Moreover, the new tax credit won't apply until April 2001, while the married couple's allowance is abolished from next year.

Scrapping mortgage interest relief will cost anyone with an interest-only home loan of £30,000 or more £21.47 a month. Mortgage brokers and lenders

agree that the result will be to accelerate the current move towards early repayment of home loans.

Roddy Kohn, an independent financial adviser, says: "By removing the last, admittedly small, argument in favour of slower loan repayments, Mr Brown has made it more worthwhile to pay off a mortgage early than ever before."

One move that will prove popular with employees in many firms, though mostly in successful ones, is a proposal

by the Chancellor to offer incentives to people who buy shares in their own company. The new scheme will allow staff to buy up to £1,500 of shares from their pre-tax salary. Therefore, a 22 per cent taxpayer will be able to buy £100 worth of shares for £78. In a move that will satisfy higher-rate taxpayers, this privilege is extended to them at the top rate, meaning that the same shares will only cost them £60. The companies will be allowed to give free shares up to twice the amount of those bought.

When they are cashed in, gains on the shares will be tax-free, if they are kept for 10 years. They will be subject to tax on the salary used to buy them, but this tapers off the longer a share is held, falling to zero after 10 years.

Two other measures may have an even greater financial impact on the lives of millions of savers and borrowers. The first was the announcement by the Chancellor this week that mortgage lenders will face far tougher rules on the way they set out the true cost of their loans. In recent years, lending rates have become all but impossible to understand.

APR, as a mechanism for standardising headline mortgage costs, became virtually useless. From now, lenders will be required to show the APR as a reflection of the true cost of a loan, including initial charges and any other application fees over the full period of the loan. That means any discount or fixed period is seen in the context of the variable rate for the remaining period. Where a variable rate is cited, it will be possible to tell the true difference between annual and daily interest calculations.

Just as important is the fact that the Financial Services Authority, the City watchdog, will now be publishing "best-buy" league tables for pension funds, mortgages and other investments. This will increase the pressure on companies to cut the charges they levy on their products, forcing them to deliver decent value to their clients - in many cases for the first time ever.

Who knows, one day Robin "Gordon" Hood's legacy may be to have delivered something that appeared to cost nothing - while benefiting millions of us at the same time.

Nic Cicutti Comment, page 2
Internet Investor, page 3
Brian Tora, page 4
The Budget in Your Pocket, pages 6 & 7

BARGAIN HUNTER



Property of the week
Sweet dreams are made of this

A lock up for the Porsche in London would cost about £28,500, but it's the price being asked for an end of terrace three-bedroom house in Boston, Lincolnshire. It has just had a new damp course installed, has been re-wired, and has gas central heating. There is an 11ft sitting room, dining room and fitted kitchen. The bathroom is downstairs and the third bedroom is reached via the second, but the vendor is offering to pay the 5 per cent deposit, making the price £27,075. Details from Eleys Residential (01205 361687).

ROSALIND RUSSELL

Car of the Week
A sexy Italian job

Fiat make sexy cars. Just take a look at the radically styled Fiat Coupe, or the open-topped, though left-hand drive, Fiat Barchetta. Fiat make practical cars too like the brilliant Punto supermini and capable Seicento City car. But in the competitive medium-car sector, the Fiat Marea struggles against the Ford Mondeo and Peugeot 406. Yet the Marea Estate Weekend is distinctive, useful and in HFX trim, very well equipped. So a 1998 R-registered example saving almost £8,000 on the new price and with 12 months free insurance from Ryauto in Slough (01384 393231) is worth considering. There is a choice of colours. Cost £9,995.

JAMES RUPPERT

Deal of the week
Tax-free jiggery-pokery

Holden Meehan, London-based independent financial advisers, open at 9am on Monday. Bear this in mind when considering this bargain. Holden Meehan is one of the few advisers left in the UK which still has access to a Scottish Widows Extra Income & Growth PEP, a five-year fund which guarantees tax-free income of 6 per cent or 45 per cent tax free at the end of the investment period. Clever tax jiggery-pokery means investors can park both their £5,000 general PEP allowance and £3,000 single company PEP, £9,000 in all. You can also transfer your duff PEPs into this fund. Any drawbacks? You trade safety for further growth. And Holden Meehan only has £200,000 available. Call 0171-692 1700.

NIC CICUTTI

New investment fund finally launched for devout Muslims

Thanks to the emergence of open-ended investment companies, Muslims now have a fund that can invest in accordance with Sharia. By Tony Lyons

ORTHODOX MEMBERS of Britain's near two million Muslim community have long had a problem when it comes to investment.

They could invest in the ordinary shares of listed companies that they felt complied with the tenets of the Koran. But the prohibitions against earning interest on any money invested meant that collective investment schemes, such as unit and investment trusts, were mostly out of bounds to devout Muslims.

According to Hamish Archibald, of City Financial Managers: "Under the regulations governing unit trusts, a fund manager has to invest to maximise the returns to shareholders. This means that any cash

in the fund has to earn the highest rate of interest that is prudently available." Even ethical funds had no appeal as these fell down on this score. This has meant that in order to have a well-diversified portfolio, a Muslim had to be sufficiently wealthy to invest directly in a portfolio of shares rather than spread risk through pooled funds.

However, with the emergence of OEICs (open-ended investment companies), new funds with a company-type structure that are set to replace traditional unit trusts, this specific regulation is removed. This is the key difference that has allowed such a fund, Al-Safa Investment Fund, to be launched, according to

Mr Archibald, whose London-based firm looks after the fund's administration services.

At long last, devout UK Muslims have an authorised fund in which they can invest. Set up as an OEIC, investment management has been delegated to Greig Middleton.

The fund will invest in accordance with Sharia (Islamic religious law). This means it will only invest in a company after the managers decide it meets all the requirements of the faith and that it meets the approval of an independent supervisory board qualified in Sharia.

As well as any interest-earning deposits or stock, there is a long list of other prohibited investments.

These include anything to do with banking, life assurance, alcohol, gambling, pornography, any company involved with pork or pork products, and any other company that the supervisory board finds unacceptable. Interestingly, unlike ethical funds, Al-Safa could invest in armament manufacturers.

Brian Tora, the head of Greig Middleton's Asset Management arm, who is also a regular columnist in The Independent, will be selecting the portfolio from companies in the FTSE 350.

"While there are a lot of companies we can't invest in," says Mr Tora, "there are probably 200 or so that fit the criteria from which we

can select our shares. We initially want to invest in 25 or so companies, building up to maybe 70 holdings."

How popular the fund will be is difficult to judge. "I think that it is a good start," says Bipen Patel, of Forum Associates, a Bolton-based independent financial adviser. "But selling a fund that invests according to Muslim principles is appealing to a niche market that has no awareness of such a fund exists."

"Much will depend on the supervisory committee's credibility with the community and where they draw the line on investments."

Four members have been appointed to the supervisory committee, all well-known members

of the Muslim community and all qualified in Sharia.

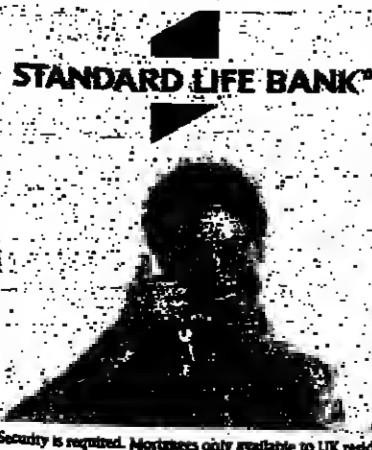
They are Dr. Sharihaw, a respected member of the Islamic Cultural Centre in London; Mohamed Rafiq, experienced in both banking and finance; Dr. Gamil Manna, a professor of Sharia in Toronto; and Dr. Abdul Rahman, an imam at Cairo's Al-Azhar University.

"It has taken us over three years to find someone to launch a fund that invests in strict adherence with our religious laws," says Ian Thomson of STZ, the London-based Muslim partnership which initiated Al-Safa Investment Fund. "Greig Middleton was recommended as they are the country's leading private client

stockbroker and a well-known fund management group."

Minimum investment in Al-Safa fund is £1,000, or £50 per month. It has an initial charge of 5.3 per cent and an annual charge of 1.75 per cent. As the initial offer period closes on 29 March, units are being created on application, so it can be used for a PEP if applications are received before the end of the financial year. Otherwise it can be included in an Individual Savings Account after 6 April.

Contacts: Greig Middleton on 0171-655 4000; City Financial Managers on 0171-556 8800; Forum Associates on 01204 433753



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Whether you have a private or a state pension, you still need to top it up to ensure a comfortable retirement. By Andy Couchman

Setting enough income in retirement is very much an exercise in building, and the starting point is your employer. The general rule is that if you have the opportunity to join your employer's pension scheme, do so. Many will pay 1/80 or 1/60 of your final income as pension for each year of service. That means that if you join at 40 and plan to retire at 60, even a good scheme is likely to pay only 20/60 of your final salary as pension, less if you take part of it as a tax-free lump sum.

income if you are under 35, rising to up to 40 per cent of your income if you are between 61 and 74.

If you run a company or your company wants to set up a small scheme for you, perhaps with other employees, an executive pension allows much more to be invested, but restricts how much you can take out at retirement.

Pension planning can be extremely complex, especially if you are looking to exploit every loophole to invest as much as possible. For most people, though, it is more a question of how much you can afford to

Until recently it made sense to buy an annuity on retirement to generate a guaranteed income, but recent falls in annuity rates, reflecting falling long-term interest rates generally, mean that you may be better off continuing to build up capital for as long as possible. Your pension is likely to be one of the biggest investments you will make in your lifetime. Getting it right means taking advantage of all the tax loopholes you can, planning early and keeping your investment under review at least every year. Even if you have left it late, it still makes sense to start

than 10 times their salary if they plan to retire at 60. That would require a generous employer, but it shows too that it is never too late to start thinking about retirement planning.

Unless you have the necessary detailed knowledge required, use an independent financial adviser to advise you. You may have to pay for the service, but that is likely to be cheaper in the long run than them being paid by commission from your policy provider. Expect to pay around £20 an hour or more and make sure that the basis of payment is agreed in writing up-front.

The good news is that many employer schemes allow you to pay more through what is known as an additional voluntary contribution or AVC. The Revenue's rules allow you to count taxable extras such as company cars and medical insurance as salary too, so the amount you may be able to invest this way can be quite appreciable. You will benefit too from getting tax relief on every pound you save, regardless of what type of pension scheme you have, and at your highest rate of tax.

One tip is to save as much as you can comfortably afford, then top your fund up from any annual bonus, overtime or windfall. Ask yourself too, what your likely spending will be during retirement.

If your spending will be low, your mortgage paid off and you travel little, you might be better off spending more today, comfortable in the knowledge that your pension will still provide enough for you to live on. If your spending will be high then, unless you sell off assets,

Only if you have actually retired will it really be too late. The longer you wait to start, however, the less your pension will be or the more you will have to save. The Revenue allows someone aged 59 to save more

	40	50	55
%	23.4%	46.2%	74.2%

HOW MUCH TO PUT IN YOUR PENSION					
Accumulated savings as a percentage of salary	Age at entry				
	25	30	40	50	55
0%	10.3%	13.4%	23.4%	46.2%	74.2%
100%	5.2%	8.4%	17.6%	38.3%	63.2%
200%	0.1%	3.1%	11.7%	30.3%	52.1%
300%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	22.3%	41.0%
400%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	14.3%	30.0%

Source: Office of Fair Trading. Note: these figures are based on a number of assumptions, including retiring at age 65. In practice falling annuity rates may mean you should look to save more if you can.



**INTERNET
INVESTOR**
ROBIN AMLÔT

■ Revenue will develop a new Internet-based service alongside its existing electronic services.

The Prime Minister has already set a target for 25 per cent of transactions with the Government to be capable of being done electronically by 2002. The Government has apparently resolved its concerns about security and encryption and the ability to use encrypted digital signatures to authenticate information sent over the Internet. Of course, this is all very well but what if you do not have a computer at home? Well, cyber-Chancellor has the answer to that one – offering a tax boost to encourage wider computer use and computer skills as part of a package of measures to increase computer access. So, from the start of the new tax year, 6 April, 1999, employees will be able to loan a computer from their employer without being faced with a tax charge. This means you can have a work-supplied computer at home, without a tax bill for the benefit-in-kind you are getting.

Budget:
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget99
Inland Revenue:
www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk
 Robin can be reached at
RobinAmlot@aol.com

businesses and individual taxpayers the option of sending tax information, such as VAT and Income Tax Returns, via the Internet. Legislation will be put forward in the Finance Bill for Customs & Excise and the Inland Revenue to develop electronic services that we, as taxpayers, can use as an alternative to the current legal requirement of paper communication.

This should make life easier for the nine million or so of us stogging our annual way through the self-assessment tax returns. The Inland

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A safety net with too many holes

You take out insurance policies in case something goes wrong. But what do you do if what goes wrong is that you never really had an insurance policy in the first place? Paul Slade investigates

IF YOU take out an insurance policy and something goes wrong, it can be of comfort to know that there are various ways of obtaining redress, but unfortunately these are not always easy or affordable.

At times, a dispute may force the intervention of the Insurance Ombudsman, an industry-funded but independent scheme. If you have a complaint about a broker, it can be made to the Insurance Brokers Registration Council (IBRC), a watchdog which currently regulates its members' conduct - though possibly not for much longer.

But what happens if the insurer or the intermediary selling the policy are not part of any complaints system? One pensioner's dispute with Swinton Group, the nationwide firm of intermediaries, has shown how easily some firms can dodge the industry's arbitration.

Mr Maling discovered last July that the Sheffield house he thought he had insured through Swinton was not covered after all. This left

him with repair bills of £2,500 and no insurance to pay them. The row revolves round a December 1997 letter from Swinton asking Mr Maling to contact the company immediately. Mr Maling never received that letter, and so never discovered his policy had been cancelled.

Because Swinton had accepted and retained his premium payment, Mr Maling had no reason to think the insurance had not remained in force.

Mr Maling believes Swinton should have made more effort to tell him of the true situation, and has been trying to get some redress from the company ever since (see box). Despite admitting to a string of "unsatisfactory features" in how the case was handled, Swinton so far has offered Mr Maling no more than an ex gratia payment of £100 which he would get only if he agreed to drop his complaint.

"This is altogether wrong," Mr Maling insists. "Swinton should be stopped from being able to do this sort of thing."

None of the insurance industry's three most established arbitration procedures seem able to help resolve this dispute, because Swinton refuses to join the voluntary bodies which run them. These schemes aim to provide a cheap and impartial ruling in cases which insurers and customers cannot settle between themselves.

But Swinton has chosen not to join either the Insurance Ombudsman Bureau (IOB) or the back-up Personal Insurance Arbitration Service. Swinton is not a registered insurance broker, which rules out the IBRC scheme as well. The IOB scheme has been open to intermediaries like Swinton since last year. But few have joined so far, and the ombudsman is powerless against those who choose to stay out.

IOB spokesman Michael Lovegrove says: "Swinton are not members of the bureau, and not subject to the ombudsman's jurisdiction. Can the ombudsman make Swinton pay for a failure? No, he can't."

Swinton director June Price says IOB membership is "something we are looking at for the future".

Neither the Association of British Insurers nor the Financial Services Authority, which covers the industry, seem able to help Mr Maling either.

Swinton is subject to the ABI code of practice. But ABI spokeswoman Suzanne Moore says the code would probably not apply in this case because, strictly speaking, Mr Maling's complaint is not a matter of sales practice.

An FSA spokesman says: "If you're not going to call yourself a broker, but operate as an intermediary, that is not regulated. It is not a responsibility of the FSA."

If Mr Maling wants to take his complaint any further, Mr Price says, he will have to go to court.

"We have professional indemnity insurance for any professional negligence, so the normal recourse would be via a solicitor," she says. But Mr Maling says this is an option he cannot afford.



How to get justice? Edward S. Jay

PEP

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WHAT WENT WRONG?

John Maling's problems with Swinton started in July 1998, when he rang the company and asked about renewing the buildings cover on his Sheffield house.

Much to his surprise, Swinton told him cover on the house had been cancelled months earlier. Maling had, by then, moved from Sheffield to Luton, and had rented out the house to tenants referred to him by Sheffield Council's housing department.

He had given Swinton a cheque to pay for the insurance in July 1997. What he did not know was that Norman Insurance - the company whose policy he thought he held - had since decided not to cover the house.

Swinton says it wrote to Mr Maling's Luton address on 30 December 1997, sending the letter by recorded delivery. But Swinton cannot produce a recorded delivery slip to prove this.

By December 1997, Mr Maling had moved again, arranging for the Post Office to forward letters to his third address. But he never received Swinton's letter. The letter was returned to Swinton on 9 January 1998, marked "not called for". Swinton made no further effort to contact Mr Maling, or to return his premium until after Mr Maling's July 1998

phone call. When Mr Maling went to check on the Sheffield house, he found the tenants had vanished, leaving him with repairs estimated at £2,500 and no insurance to cover them.

Had he known the Norman Insurance policy was invalid, Mr Maling claims, he could have bought insurance elsewhere.

David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education and an old friend of Mr Maling's, took up the issue.

On 5 October 1998, Swinton's John Morley wrote to Mr Blunkett admitting: "There are some unsatisfactory features: (a) it is difficult to see why Norman didn't simply reject the risk as soon as it was aware of potential DSS referrals; (b) we have destroyed the evidence of the recorded delivery letter; (c) we did not give notice of cancellation and (d) we did not return the premium."

Swinton has now refunded Mr Maling's premium, but has included no interest to cover the 12 months while it held the cheque. Following The Independent's enquiries, Swinton and Norman Insurance have offered to arrange a face-to-face meeting with Mr Maling to discuss his case further.

The Index-Tracking PEP

Source: Mifcor-LGIM on an offer to buy shares with gross income reinvested from 01.11.95 (Legal & General's PEP launch date) to 01.03.99. Based on all PEPs that track the same index with all charges included. Source: Mifcor-LGIM on an offer to buy shares with gross income reinvested from 01.11.95 (Legal & General's PEP launch date) to 01.03.99. PEP returns take into account PEP charges. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. From 01.03.99 tax credits on UK dividend distributions will only be able to be reclaimed by PEPs at a reduced rate of 10%. Both capital and income values may go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount invested. All comparisons of cost apply to PEPs investing wholly in unit trusts. Full written details are available on request. All statements are correct as at 01.03.99. The Government have announced that contributions can only be made to PEPs until April 1999. From that date a new tax privileged savings vehicle, the Individual Savings Account (ISA) will be available. Legal & General (Direct) Limited, Registered in England No. 2702080. Registered Office: Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 4TP. Legal & General Direct is a representative only of the Legal & General marketing group, members of which are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and (SIB) for the purposes of recommending, advising on and selling life assurance and investment products bearing Legal & General's name. PEPs are provided by Legal & General Unit Trust Managers Limited.

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Winner or loser?

The Budget has introduced a myriad of changes, each of which will affect individuals differently depending on circumstances

MILLIONS OF Britain's taxpayers, mortgage borrowers, married couples, holiday-makers, savers and pensioners will be affected by this week's Budget.

The Chancellor, Gordon Brown, has delivered one of the most complicated Budgets in recent years, making it extremely difficult to work out whether the overall effect on each individual will ultimately be positive or negative.

Even some of the beneficial changes have a sting in their tale. For example, the 10 pence starting rate of tax for the first £1,500 of taxable income is offset by the fact that Mr Brown is raising from 20 to 23 per cent (22 per cent in 12 months' time) the rate of tax that would normally have been levied on the next £2,800-worth of income.

A similar picture emerges from a range of other measures announced this week. For the benefit of our readers, we have broken down and laid out the major changes in the Budget on the next two pages.

Given the complexity and detail of some of these changes, however, it is possible that some aspects of the Budget critical to your needs may not be immediately apparent. It may be necessary for you to consult an independent financial adviser or an accountant.

This will, at first sight, seem like an unnecessary and time-consuming experience. But given some of the small print emerging from this Budget, it could well be sensible to take advice.

NIC CICUTTI

SHARE SAVE SCHEMES

TO ENCOURAGE more UK employees to back their employers, the Chancellor plans to unite the existing popular Save As You Earn Share Save scheme and companies' Profit Sharing schemes to form an alternative tax shelter.

SAYE schemes, which are already offered by 75 per cent of Britain's biggest companies, allow employees to save regularly, and then use the proceeds to buy

shares at a discounted price set at the outset.

Profit-related pay has now disappeared, but companies can still incentivise staff through profit-sharing schemes which involves giving shares to the workforce, tax-free provided they are held for three years.

Under the Government's proposals, employees could use £1,500 from pre-tax income to buy shares in

their company. In effect, this would cost a basic rate taxpayer only £1,155, and a higher rate taxpayer £900.

Any gains arising on the shares while they are held in the scheme will be tax-free after three years. When they are cashed in, they will be subject to tax on the salary used to buy them. But this will taper off to zero after 10 years.

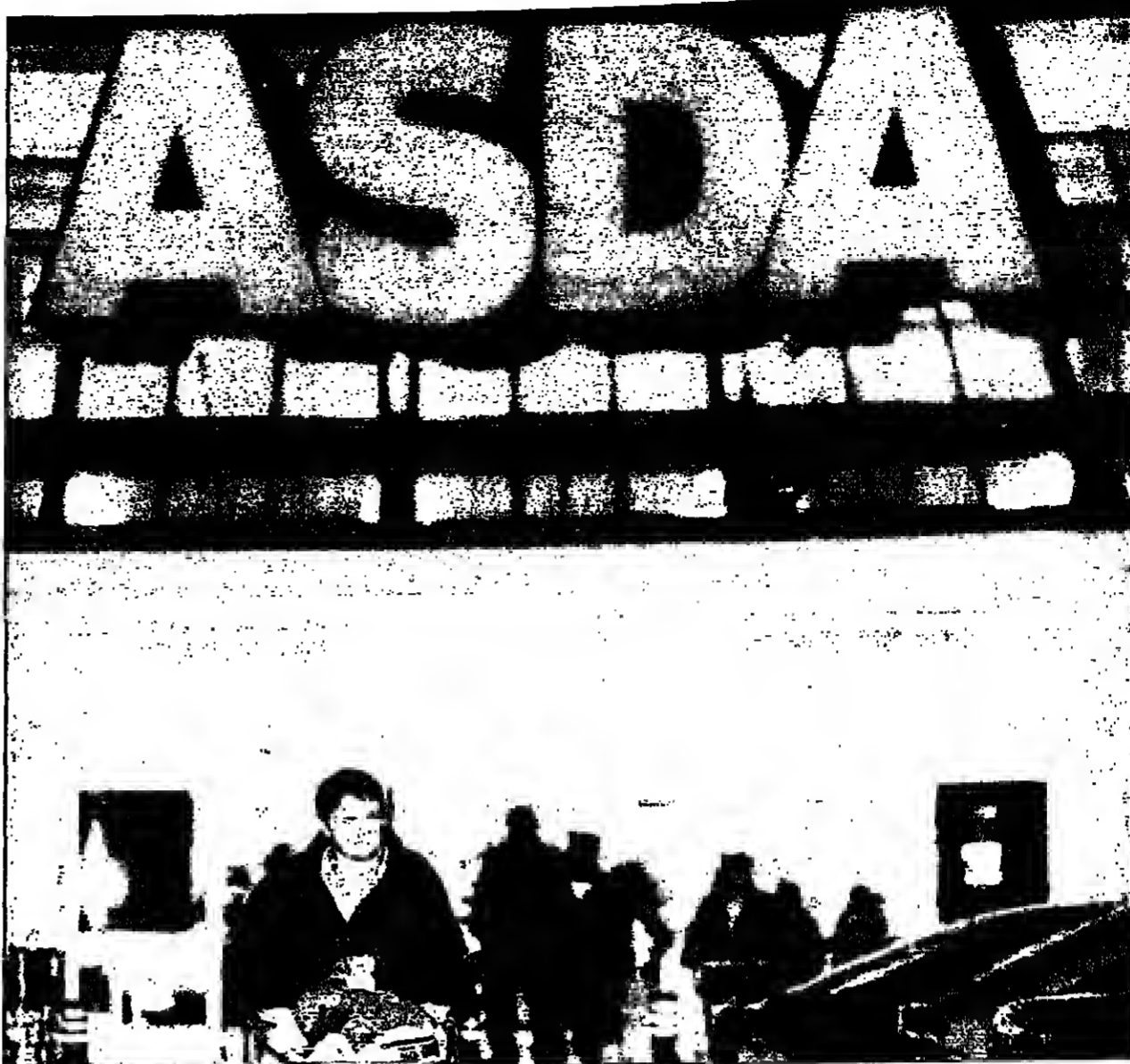
Employers will be able to match whatever the

employee saves with twice that amount in free shares.

PricewaterhouseCoopers spokesman, Sandy Pepper, says: "You could argue this is a risky strategy, putting all your eggs in one basket; if the firm goes bust you lose your job and your savings and everything."

"But the reality is that employees do very well out of these schemes, and the risks are low."

TERESA HUNTER



Employees will benefit from share schemes like that run by Asda

Tony Nicoletti

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THE CHANCELLOR, Gordon Brown, confirmed the introduction of a 10 pence starting rate of tax to take effect from 6 April. The new rate will apply on the first £1,500 of taxable income above the personal allowance of £4,335.

Mr Brown also pledged that the Government would reduce the next tax level from 23 per cent to 22 per cent in April of next year.

The 10 pence rate will replace the former 20 per cent rate, which is being scrapped. The 20 per cent rate covered the first £1,300 of taxable income, after allowances. However, scrapping the 20 per cent rate means that the 23 per cent tax slice has been extended downwards.

The higher tax bracket of 40 per cent will now begin to apply to earnings above £28,000, allowances after, or £32,335 before the single person's allowance.

At the same time, the Chancellor announced that from

April next year, employees who are not contracted out of the state top-up pension scheme, Serps, will see their National Insurance contributions both harmonised with the tax regime and raised in two tranches.

The net effect, according to Arthur Andersen, chartered accountants, will be that, taking both NI contributions and tax into account, a single person earning £5,000 a year will be £14.29 better off from April. The net gain remains at roughly that level until £25,000, rising to £22.83 better off on salaries above £35,000 and beyond.

A married person earning £10,000 a year, and whose married couple's tax allowance is being abolished, will see a net monthly increase in salary of £7.26, rising to £15.50 on earnings above £35,000.

The changes to National Insurance are aimed at harmonising the rate at which individuals are taxed at the bottom end. At present, em-

ployees face paying a NI bill of 2 per cent on the first £64 of their weekly income as soon as it reaches that level. This was described in the Budget as: "A tax on work, the entry fee every employee has to pay simply to be part of the NI system."

Thereafter, NI contribution levels rise to 10 per cent on incomes between £64 and £485 a week. Mr Brown is proposing to alter the system from this April, by raising the weekly level on which NI is payable to £66. Now there will be no 2 per cent payable on earnings up to and including that amount.

The upper limit on which NI is payable will rise to £500 a week. In April 2000, the earnings point above which employees pay NI contributions will be raised by £21 per week over two years - from £66 in April 1999 to £76 in April 2000 and then to £87 - the level of the single person's tax allowance - in April 2001.

At the same time, the upper

earnings limit, the point above which employees stop paying NI contributions, will be raised by £30 per week to £535 from April 2000, and then by £55 per week from April 2001, to £575 per week.

For someone earning more than £575 a week, the weekly NI burden will rise from £13.28 at present to £18.48 a week in April 2001, or about £20 a month.

For the self-employed, flat-rate NI contributions of £5.55 per week, paid once earnings exceed £72.50, will be cut to £2 a week. However, NI will be raised from 6 per cent on profits between £145 and £500 per week to 7 per cent.

At the same time, the lower earnings point above which NI is payable will be cut to £85 per week, and the upper limit will be raised to £535, and then to £575 by 2001. The total effect will be to raise the maximum rate of NI payable from £21.30 to £34.30 a week.

NIC CICUTTI

MIRAS/STAMP DUTY

THE ABOLITION of mortgage interest tax relief (Miras) from April 2000 will cost £17.37 a month for homeowners with borrowings of £30,000.

The cut is equivalent to a 0.35 per cent interest hike for a typical borrower. But some experts predicted it would go largely unnoticed at a time when interest rates have fallen several times, by up to 2 per cent, in the past six months.

Brokers argued this week that now the final tax breaks on mortgages are to be removed, it would strengthen the impetus for early repayment of home loans.

Meanwhile, some lenders have quietly welcomed the demise of Miras, already eroded to 10 per cent. They will now

be free to redesign the traditional 25-year loan, mixing other kinds of credit more flexibly with the mortgage package.

Less welcome is the increase in stamp duty, which will hit residents of housing hot spots throughout Britain, and will cause hardship to those living in London and the south-east of England.

From next Tuesday, homes above £250,000 will incur 2.5 per cent in stamp duty, 0.5 per cent higher than at present. Similarly, the rate for those over £500,000 rises to 3.5 per cent. If you have already exchanged contracts, the old rates will apply.

Property below £60,000 will continue to be free of stamp fees on purchase. Up to £250,000, the current 1 per cent will be levied.

TERESA HUNTER

MARRIED PERSON'S TAX

Gross annual income	Monthly tax and NI 1998-99	Monthly tax and NI 1999-00	New net monthly salary	Monthly change in net salary
15,000	275.41	268.15	981.85	7.26
25,000	550.81	543.15	1,540.19	7.26
40,000	963.06	947.57	2,385.77	15.49
100,000	2,963.06	2,947.57	5,385.77	15.49

SINGLE PERSON'S TAX

Gross annual income	Monthly tax and NI 1998-99	Monthly tax and NI 1999-00	New net monthly salary	Monthly change in net income
15,000	299.16	284.56	965.44	14.60
25,000	574.16	559.56	1,523.77	14.60
40,000	986.81	963.98	2,369.35	22.83
100,000	2,986.81	2,963.98	5,369.35	22.83

PENSIONS

THE AVERAGE pensioner household will gain £240 a year from this Budget. More than 200,000 pensioners will be taken off income tax through a boost to tax allowances for the over-65s. For people aged 65 to 74, the additional allowance rises by £310 a year, to £5,720. Pensioners over 75 will have their allowance raised by a further £160, to £5,980 before tax.

Pensioners are also ex-

empted from the abolition of the married couple's allowance.

The Chancellor has also boosted the level of the minimum income guarantee introduced in the last Budget, in line with earnings rather than prices. Single pensioners will be guaranteed £75 a week and couples £116.60, this year. Next year, the guarantee will rise to £78 and £120.

ANDREW VERITY

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The Equitable



Tony Nicoletti
Questions
National Insurance

earnings limit, the point above which employees stop paying NI contributions, will be raised by £30 per week to £355 from April 2000, and then by £35 per week from April 2001, to £575 per week.

For someone earning more than £575 a week, the weekly NI burden will rise from £33.23 at present to £38 a week in April 2001, or about £20 a month.

For the self-employed, the rate NI contributions of 6.55 per week, based on earnings between £225 and £3,000, will be cut to £5 a week. However, NI will be raised from 6 per cent on profits between £110 and £200 per week to 7 per cent.

At the same time, the lower earnings limit on which NI is payable will be cut to £85 per week, and the upper limit will be raised to £3,000, and then to £5,000 by 2001. The total effect will be to raise the maximum rate of NI payable from £21.30 to £34.30 a week.

NIC CHITTY

PERSON'S TAX		
Rate	Monthly change in net salary	Monthly change in net income
10%	£1.00	£1.00
20%	£2.00	£2.00
30%	£3.00	£3.00
40%	£4.00	£4.00
50%	£5.00	£5.00

PERSON'S TAX		
Rate	Monthly change in net salary	Monthly change in net income
10%	£1.00	£1.00
20%	£2.00	£2.00
30%	£3.00	£3.00
40%	£4.00	£4.00
50%	£5.00	£5.00

equipped from the date of the first payment of the allowance.

The 10 per cent rate has also been reduced from 10 per cent to 5 per cent for those who are not employed in the United Kingdom.

With earnings of £10,000 a year, the allowance will be £1,000 a year. The allowance will be £2,000 a year for those with earnings of £20,000 a year.

ANITA FARM

MOTORING



Company car drivers will be hit hard Andrew Burman

COMPANY CAR drivers have learnt over the past few years that their vehicles are less of a perk than they once might have been. This week, the Chancellor told them that they stand to pay even more.

Mr Brown announced that while the tax charge, at 35 per cent of the list price of a company car, will continue to reduce depending on the number of miles driven, it will not reduce as sharply.

Henceforth, it will fall to 25 per cent if the car is driven between 2,500 miles and 17,999 miles a year for business travel and down to 15 per cent if the mileage is above 18,000.

The biggest hit is on petrol duty, up 6 per cent above inflation, or 3.75p a litre, pushing the price of a gallon of unleaded fuel above 23 for the first time. Unleaded fuel will rise faster, by 4.25p to 24.4p, while diesel will jump 6.14p to 21p.

This was combined with measures aimed at encouraging the use of smaller cars. Vehicle excise duty will drop from £150 to £100 for cars with engines smaller than 1,100 cc, while rising £5 for others.

ANDREW VERITY

SAVINGS

PLANS TO continue taxing savings at 20 per cent, despite the introduction of the 10 pence band, looks certain to spark a row.

The Inland Revenue has confirmed that deposits in banks and building societies will face a 20 per cent savings tax, even if savers only pay 10 per cent tax on their income.

Non-taxpayers can continue to receive interest gross, but 10 per cent payers will not be able to reclaim the extra 10 per cent.

Adrian Coles, director general at the Building Societies Association, says: "The people who will be most affected by this will be those on low incomes and with only modest savings, mainly pensioners. We intend to raise the issue with the Treasury."

"The Government's argument is that the 10p tax rate was introduced as an incentive to people in work, but why should pensioners who have worked all their lives, be penalised?"

TERESA HUNTER

TAX ON CHILDREN'S SAVINGS



A tax loophole on children's savings is gone Chadwick

PARENTS WHO have been using a loophole which allowed them to avoid paying tax when they transferred money to their children will no longer be able to do so following this week's Budget.

Up to now, if a parent opened a savings account in a child's name, the account was allowed to earn up to £100 interest a year before it became subject to tax. However, many thousands of parents have used trust law to avoid this tax law. They have set up a "bare" or accumulation trust, which meant the income in the trust became the child's. In turn, this allowed the child's own tax allowance to be used, saving a parent up to £1,678 a year in tax.

Many fund management firms, such as investment trusts, have tended to incorporate bare trusts within the children's savings schemes they offered to the public, costing the Inland Revenue up to £50m a year in tax.

From this week, new bare trust arrangements, or money added to existing trusts, will no longer be sheltered from income tax, unless the income is less than £100.

NIC CHITTY

INSURANCE PREMIUM TAX

INSURANCE PREMIUM tax (IPT) will rise by 1 per cent to 5 per cent in July adding, £3 to the cost of a typical motor contract of £315 and a similar amount on an average home insurance policy of £285.

The Chancellor said this week that the vast majority of insurance products would continue to be exempt from IPT.

However, insurers argued that the tax, which is levied on motor, property, travel and extended warranty policies, would affect every household.

One study claimed the increase would mean an extra £16-15 a year in tax.

IPT was introduced in 1994 and pegged at 2.5 per cent. Last year, the Government raised IPT for travel insurance to 1.5 per cent.

A spokesman for Direct Line said: "Unlike VAT, insurance premium tax is not recoverable and, as we have consistently maintained in the past, it is unrealistic to suggest that insurers can absorb the tax."

TERESA HUNTER

MORTGAGE AND CREDIT

MORTGAGE AND credit lenders will be forced to provide clear comparable information on the products they offer. The proposals include measures to specify the way in which Annual Percentage Rates (APRs) for low-start and discount mortgages are calculated.

A single formula for calculating APRs across the European Union will have to be implemented, allowing borrowers to work out how much their mortgages will cost relative to those in any other European country.

The Financial Services Authority will be given powers to take action against lenders under the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations. It will not be possible for such regulations to be introduced retrospectively. The 1971 is, however, preparing to publish proposals on allowing the courts to reopen "extrajurisdictional" contracts.

NIC CHITTY

INHERITANCE/CAPITAL GAINS TAX



Inheritance tax has not changed much Centre Press

EACH YEAR, reports of the widespread reform of inheritance and capital gains tax prove much exaggerated and this year was no exception - if anything, the reverse.

From April, estates worth less than £231,000 will escape inheritance tax, after the threshold is lifted by £3,000.

Similarly the ceiling on capital gains tax (CGT) is lifted from £5,800 to £7,100, and in future it will be levied at either 20 per cent or 40 per cent. Following the introduction of a new 10 per cent starting rate, the 23 per cent rate is to be abolished.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, has, however, put in place measures to prevent wealthy people from passing substantial property to the next generation, following the House of Lords ruling in favour of Lady Ingram.

To protect the family estate from inheritance tax, she devised a complex deal which involved giving her property to her solicitor, while placing the freehold in a trust for her children, and obtaining a lease for herself.

The legal loophole exploited by these arrangements has now been closed. Less imaginative attempts to give away a family home while continuing to live there, would always have fallen foul of the Inland Revenue, unless the former owner paid a commercial rent.

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"Source: Micropal/LGIM on an offer to bid basis based on all PEP charges with gross income re-invested from 01.10.96 to 01.03.99.

Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. From 06.04.99 tax credits on UK dividend distributions will only be able to be reclaimed by PEPs at a reduced rate of 10%. Both capital and income values may go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount you invested.

Tax assumptions are those currently applicable and are subject to statutory change. The value of tax relief will depend on your individual circumstances. The exchange rate variations may cause the value of overseas investments to increase or decrease. Full written details are available on request.

All statements are correct as at 01.03.99. The Government have announced that contributions can only be made to PEPs until April 1999. From that date a new tax privileged savings vehicle, the Individual Savings Account (ISA) will be available. Issued by Legal & General (Unit Trust Managers) Limited. Registered in England. No. 1009418. Registered Office: Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 4TP. Legal & General (Direct) Limited is a representative only of the Legal & General marketing group, members of which are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO for the purposes of recommending, advising on and selling life assurance and investment products bearing Legal & General's name.

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Legal & General

How
out

Spread the risks

Distribution bonds are less volatile than other forms of managed savings, yet they can deliver excellent returns. By Tony Lyons

WHICH DISTRIBUTION FUND TO INVEST IN

Performance (%) of the main distribution funds (income reinvested) to 29/1/99

LIFE FUNDS	1 YR	3 YRS	5 YRS
Allied Dunbar Distribution (01793 514514)	7.5	36.0	45.6
AXA EL Distribution (01494 463463)	9.7	34.5	43.5
Clerical Med Fld Distribution (0117 9290290)	8.4	37.1	-
Friends Provident Distribution (01722 413306)	7.0	47.0	-
Friends Provident Monthly Distribution	12.4	40.2	-
Legal & General Distribution Acc (01273 826100)	9.1	33.3	-
M&G Balanced Income & Growth (0800 3283196)	7.3	32.9	-
NPI Classic Distribution (01892 515151)	12.6	32.8	-
Prudential II Distribution Bond 52 (0345 601601)	4.8	29.3	41.4
Royal & Sun Alliance Distribution (0151 238 3000)	6.6	43.5	57.7
Save & Prosper Distribution (0800 727700)	7.8	-	-
Scottish Amicable Distribution (01786 448844)	8.6	33.3	-
Scottish Equitable Distribution (0131 339 9191)	10.3	36.8	-
Scottish Prov High Yield Distribution	15.6	41.0	51.6
Scottish Prov Inst Monthly Dist (0131 556 9181)	8.9	32.3	-
Skandia Distribution (01703 726802)	8.5	34.3	38.7
Standard Life Distribution (0131 225 2552)	9.4	39.5	-
Sun Life Distribution (0117 989 3000)	10.2	47.5	55.1
Sun Life High Yield Distribution	9.7	-	-
UNIT TRUSTS			
AXA Sun Life Distribution (0117 989 9000)	5.4	36.5	-
Barclays BGI Distribution (0181 522 4000)	2.4	31.4	-
Framlington Mgd Distribution (0345 775511)	8.1	37.8	-
Friends Provident Monthly Dist (0870 600 6300)	6.6	41.5	40.4
Newton Distributor (0800 614330)	11.4	53.8	77.0
Prudential Distribution (0345 835500)	8.2	36.5	-

FED UP with the poor returns now available from deposit accounts with the high street banks and building societies but disinclined to invest directly in equities? Don't worry. There is a means of savings that provides a relatively low risk half-way house. Called distribution bonds, these are single premium life assurance bonds, rather like with profits bonds, but where the investment is split into units.

Unlike with profits bonds where the annual bonus, the profit element, is decided by a professional actuary based on the performance of the fund over the past year, the price of the units in a distribution bond can move on a daily basis in line with the performance of the underlying securities. These types of bonds are less volatile than other forms of managed investments.

Sun Life was the first to issue distribution bonds almost 20 years ago. "We looked at the needs of investors," says Mark Stirrup, of Sun Life. "They told us that they wanted an investment that would pay a little more than they could get with a building society, an income that would increase over time and one that offered the prospect of capital growth."

The guaranteed bonds available at the time offered either a fixed income or a fixed rate of capital growth. "While there were unit trusts, these were pure equity investments," adds Stirrup. "We wanted to offer something less volatile. When we launched the Sun Life Distribution Fund, there had

never been anything like it."

Sun Life, which now manages assets of £2.78bn, had the field to itself for some 15 years before other life companies began to offer similar funds. Today, there are nearly 20 different distribution bonds available. Sun Life's bond fund is the largest, followed by Legal & General's and then the Prudential's bond.

The bonds invest in a similar way to the main life funds. In the case of Sun Life, it is 40 per cent invested in gilts and bonds, 40 per cent in equities and 20 per cent in convertibles. Quite a large proportion of the gilts are index-linked, for their safety-first, guaranteed return.

Over the past five years, anyone who invested £10,000 in this bond would have enjoyed an income of £6,952 and their capital would now be worth just under £16,000. Compare this with a higher rate building society account, where it would have generated an income of around £6,180 over the period, but the capital would not have grown at all.

With Legal & General, the £500m distribution bond fund has 82.5 per cent of its assets split between equities and fixed interest stock, another 12.5 per cent in property, while the rest is held in cash. Since its launch nearly five years ago, it has increased the income per unit every year from 2.5p in its first year to 3.08p last December. Since its launch, the price of its units has risen nearly 29 per cent.

Investors can cash in up to 5 per cent of their holding in a

distribution bond each year with payments on a monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or annual basis. Just like with profits bonds, this is treated as a return of capital.

"For higher rate taxpayers, distribution bonds can be a useful in retirement planning," says Michael Hayden of Legal & General. "Most probably, they will become basic rate taxpayers after they retire. If the bonds are cashed in then, they will have no tax liability."

Like most unit trusts, distribution bonds generally have

of unit trust management groups, including AXA Sun Life, Barclays, Framlington, M&G, Newton, Prudential and Save & Prosper also offer funds that operate in a similar way.

Usually with a minimum investment of £500 or £1,000, they invest in a mix of fixed interest and equities. "Looking to give a total return to investors; that is a rising income stream and capital growth," says Stirrup.

These unit trusts can be put into a PEP up until 5 April, all the income and any gains will be tax free. After then, when PEPs come to an end, while any growth will be free of capital gains tax, any dividends paid on the equity element of the fund will be liable to the 10 per cent rate of advanced corporation tax, which rises to 20 per cent in 2004.

"Distribution funds could become the key product for the new millennium," says Roddy Kohn of Kohn Cougar, a leading independent financial adviser. "The combination of equities, fixed interest and gilts will bring positive benefits in an era of low inflation and low interest rates so long as the fund manager picks the right kind of stocks."

While corporate bonds are the answer for those investors who want to achieve an immediate high level of income, distribution bonds and their unit trust equivalents will suit those who don't want the risks of a pure equity investment, but who would like the prospect of a steadily rising income and capital growth.

Distribution funds could become the key product for the new millennium

a 5 per cent spread between the buying and selling price of units, out of which commission is paid to financial advisers, and an annual management charge of around 1 per cent. They will also give the investor minimal life cover of 101 per cent of the original investment.

The minimum investment in a distribution bond is usually around £5,000. For larger amounts, investors will find that they will get a bigger allocation of units. Legal & General, for example, will invest 104 per cent for anyone prepared to place £30,000 or more into its own distribution bond.

Not to be outdone, a number

Check out with-profits, too

IT HAS been a good week for shares. Most investors have seen the value of portfolios grow as the FTSE-100 index of the UK's top companies rose to record levels.

For investors in both distribution and with-profits bonds, the picture has been the same. Although the overall equity weighting of either bond means that gains are not as substantial as a shares-only fund, they too have shared in the bonanza.

What are the main differences between distribution and with-profits bonds? Charles Timm, managing director at The With-Profits Shop, says: "There are similarities between the two products. But also several differences.

Some distribution bonds will have a higher proportion of their funds invested in index-linked gilts.

"Unlike distribution bonds, with-profits bonds attach a bonus every year which cannot be taken away. Depending on your attitude to risk, with-profits bonds will deliver safer returns."

"Distribution bond pay income out of dividends. You may have to accept a lower income at first. Growth in income will hopefully come from growth in the value of the fund overall."

What makes distribution and with-profits bonds attractive is the way investment is spread between different classes of assets. Nervous savers who want some of that upside

with less of the risk could do worse than consider one of both forms of investment.

The ISA Shop, a firm of discount brokers, is about to publish a guide to distribution bonds. To reserve your copy, free to Independent readers, call 01777 839205.

The Independent has produced a free 24-page Guide to With-Profits Bonds. Written by Nic Cicuth, the paper's personal finance editor, the guide examines the arguments for and against bonds and where to buy them. For your copy, sponsored by The With-Profits Shop, call 0845 2711007. Or watch out for the coupon on page 4.

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John 1550



Age shall not wither them

This Sunday, spoil your mum with a bright, funky, flower-printed gift. By Dominic Lutyens

For many, Mothering Sunday still represents a day's release from domestic servitude. Not theirs, but their mums'. Such super-mums still have a fifties picture-book image and come complete with gingham pinnies and nails perfectly manicured despite hours of pastry-pummeling. And the ideal gift for such a mum? Why, a card in misty pastels and a prima ballerina-sized bouquet, of course! Now, no one can deny that flowers are delightful. Trouble is, they're a tad ephemeral.

One alternative – and, no, we're not talking "Made to Order" plastic blooms – is the latest vogue for photo-print floral motifs on everything from cushions and shower curtains to notepads and cards. They're not always cheap, but at least they'll last. For designer Janice Trott, of London company New Renaissance, life is literally a bed of roses. On cotton or satin duvet covers, pillowcases, pyjamas and even a bath robe, she has printed recklessly scattered *trompe l'oeil* roses.

"It's based on the idea of someone leaving roses on your bed," muses Trott. "Floral fabrics are so classic. I wanted to do something different. I've made the roses look so realistic you want to pick them up."

Strong shadows cast by the roses make them look three-dimensional, as

do the print's high-definition glistening dewdrops and fluttering butterflies. Sold at London shops Graham & Green and Esilio in Wimbledon Village, or by mail order direct from New Renaissance, the range currently comes in red roses on a white background only. (A single duvet cover costs £81, pillowcases, £12 and £15, and PJ's, £65.) From May, they will also be available on pastel backgrounds, and Trott plans to branch out into other florals later in the year.

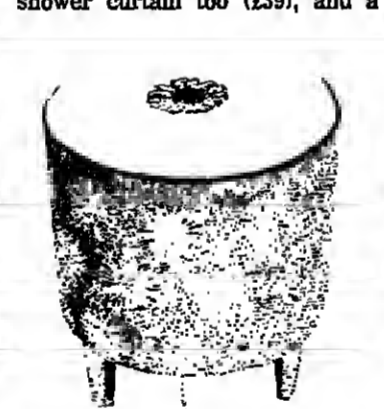
Paperchase has been bitten by the horticultural bug, too, with Mothering Sunday cards emblazoned with anemones and stargazer lilies (£1.50 each) or daffodils, crumpled lilies and birds of paradise. Paperchase also stocks notebooks strewn with photographic roses in purple and lilac (£5). Itching to squander a little more cash on your thoroughly deserving mum? Pump instead for a photo album with a ribbon tie (£27).

Should your mum find such offerings too redolent of the Queen Mum waiting room at the Chelsea Flower Show, sprint instead to the cutely named London shop Puppy for funky bedlinen smothered with Warhol-esque, photoscreen-printed gerberas in 12 eye-popping colour combos. Made by Swedish designer Hagg Bweill, Puppy's kingsize duvet covers cost £60, and pillowcases, £15 each.

Glasgow-based textile designer Jan Milne isn't one to cater to shrinking

violets, either. She uses her photo-screen-printed fabrics, teeming with daisies, tulips or water lilies, on cushions (from £50), stools (from £240), duvet covers (double £135) and bedspreads (in silk and satin £300).

Milne, whose textiles grace a New York sushi bar and a Las Vegas casino, has come up with a flower-power shower curtain too (£39), and a



mirror decorated with daisies (from £50). Recently, she has expanded her range, adding seed-packet-lustrous laminated coffee-table tops and wall panels displaying a single, full-colour, blown-up bloom.

Even more exotic are Ella Doran's exuberant blinds, wallpapers, table mats and coasters, featuring Gloriosa

lilies, roses and anemones, snapped in North Africa.

"My aim is to ensure that ordinary household objects don't go unnoticed," says Doran. It's a mission statement amply borne out by her blinds, which bear a single flower, enlarged digitally to trifid-like proportions (from £250).

Watch out for Doran's next floral foray: a range of similarly decorated crockery. Originally a textile designer, Doran discovered that her customers were more smitten with her photographic coasters boasting voluptuous blooms, shot against hand-painted backgrounds in watermelon pink or turquoise. So she changed tack, and her wares – such as coasters (£5.50 for a box of six), sell in stores up and down the land, including Glasgow's Nancy Smillie, Manchester's Lloyd Davies, and London's American Retro.

For a more natural interior, designer Alice Maynard, of London flooring company Harvey Maria, has just the thing for would-be Heidi: witty Meadow floor tiles – photos of lush grass and charming clusters of primula and dandelions.

"They were originally photographs of my parents' lawn. As you can imagine, they weren't too happy with the name Meadow," she says.

Finished in water-resistant PVC laminate, the tiles (£35 per square yard) are great for bathrooms, kitchens and conservatories. Even mums who don't identify with Heidi

running wild on an alpine slope can clack about on them in kitten heels.

If none of these blossoms appeals, why not customise a pillowcase, coaster, place mat or mug with a snapshot of Mother's favourite sprig? Snappy Snaps has the technology, and charges £9.99 for a mug and £11.99 for six coasters.

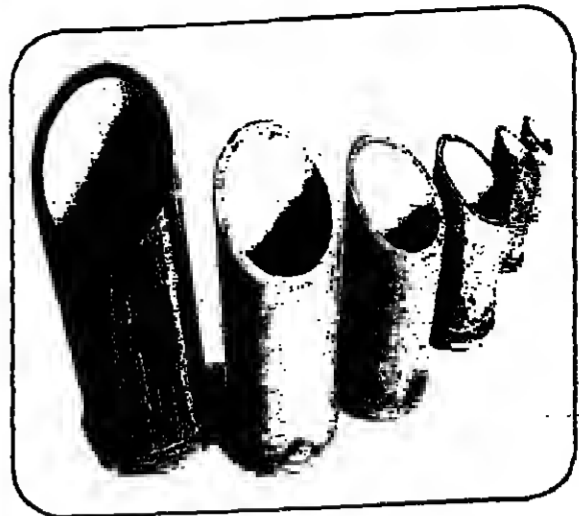
Of course, as time is running out, it's always tempting to fall back on an old-fashioned, common-or-garden bouquet. But the true bonus of photo-printed florals is that they're guaranteed to be hardy perennials.

Stockists: American Retro (0171-734 3477); Esilio (0181-945 1100); Graham & Green (0171-727 4594); Harvey Maria (0181-516 7768); Jan Milne (0141-445 5554); Lloyd Davies (0161-832 3700); Nancy Smillie (0141-248 3874); New Renaissance (0171-240 3502); Paperchase (0171-828 6458 for stockists, 0161-939 1500); Puppy (0181-964 1547); Snappy Snaps (0181-741 7474).

Main picture: Meadow floor tiles, £35. Harvey Maria. Left, from top: Purple rose photo album, £12.50, Paperchase; pillowcases, £15 each, Puppy; rose-strewn cotton pyjamas, £65, New Renaissance; lime-green and yellow stool, £300, Jan Milne

SIX OF THE BEST

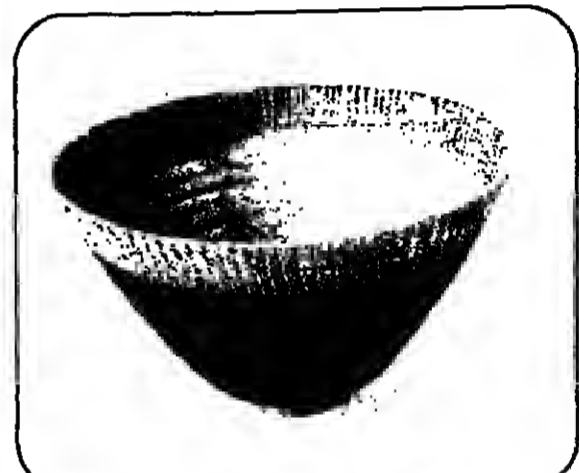
VASES



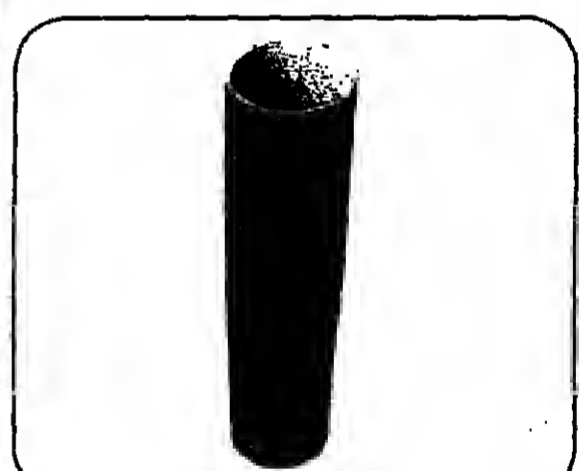
Oblique cut bamboo vases, leaf-green inside, £90 the set, Emily Readett-Bayley (0171-231 3939 for stockists)



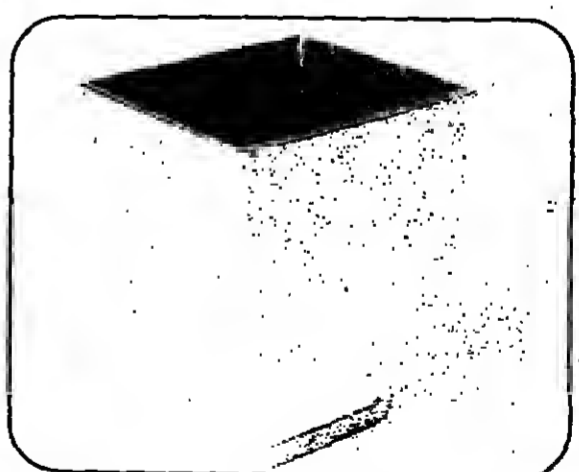
Iznik vase with a traditional 16th-century hand-painted design of red tulips. £195, V&A Museum (01672 542 288)



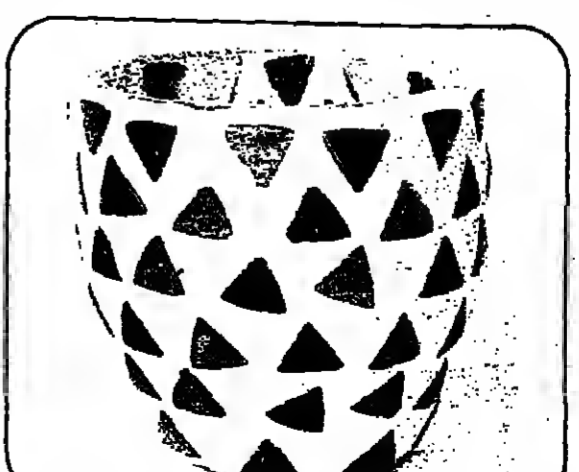
Spiga stoneware bowl with duck-egg-blue glazed interior, £135, Conran Collection (www.conrancollection.co.uk, 0171-399 0710)



Raku brown-black, cylinder vase with crackle glaze, £95, The Conran Shop (0171-589 7401)



Ellis vase - handbrushed nickel over cast brass, £38, Grimes & Co (00 353 1 667 5627)



Glass bead mosaic vase, £5.20, available in blue/green or fruit-flavour Spangles colours from Nice Irma's By Post (0181-343 9766)

CHECK IT OUT

NEW HAIR COLOURINGS THAT JUST FADE AWAY

ASK ANYONE if they've ever dyed their hair and chances are that they'll deny it. Should the visual evidence prove otherwise, the usual excuses are applied: "It was for the school play"; "I only did it for a dare"; or "The packet said honey blonde but it came out orange". The truth is that, having had a bad hair-colouring experience (and they seem to happen at the most embarrassing times), most people would only consider changing their hair colour in a professional salon.

There's nothing better for the ego than a snazzy new hairstyle, however, and there's probably been a moment when you've thought "I'd love to go blonde" or "Wouldn't it be fun to be a redhead for the day". If you want the rewards without the commitment to months of desperately trying to grow your hair if it all goes horribly wrong, there are plenty of temporary tinting products to play with.

Popular temporary dyes include Clairol's 14 shades of Loving Care (£3.59, from Boots and Superdrug branches nationwide), which takes 20 minutes to apply and lasts for around six washes, and ammonia-free Movida



Colour Reflecting Hair Conditioner lasts for six washes, JF Lazartigue; Lush's Hot Hair Colours



by Laboratoires Garnier, a range of 15 creme colourants that take 15 minutes to apply and cost £5.25 each (available from all major chemists nationwide). It lasts for about six weeks. Our tester was not impressed by Movida. After following the complicated instructions, the shade was darker than expected and left her hair feeling as though each strand had been separately and noticeably coated. "It felt like I was wearing a wig," she complained.

In the Nineties, people are more

willing to experiment with "alternative" products and often prefer more traditional – and more natural – colourants. One of the most popular of these is the Body Shop's Henna Hair Colours (enquiries: 01903 731 500). These cost £2.60 per sachet and come in a range of four colours from Rich Red Brown to Blonde, although shops currently only supply Brown. The sachets do work (although the colours can be quite subtle) and are inexpensive, but they are very messy and time-

consuming (taking up to five hours) to use, while the off-putting smell lasts for a few days afterwards.

The new hand-made Hot Hair Colours from Lush (01202 667 830 for nearest shop, 01202 668 545) are also based on henna and give a lovely softness and shine. They are messy, but only take about an hour to work and smell deliciously of spicy clove buds. The three colours – Al Khanna (fiery red), Capella File d'Oro (rich red-brown), and Solanna (strawberry

blonde) are sold in deli-style tubs and cost £5.75 each.

By far the most impressive and simple-to-use colourant, though, is by JF Lazartigue (0171-629 2950). The 10 colour-reflecting conditioners are hit-tech but they are gentle on your hair being ammonia- and peroxide-free. They fade out after four to six washes. Designed to work like make-up for the hair, you leave the conditioner on for up to 30 minutes to give the subtlest of shiny highlights and soft, springy hair. A tube of six applications costs £9.75 and a pair of protective gloves is included.

If your attempts to go naturally blonde go horribly wrong and you end up with a straw-like barnet, splash out on John Freida's Sheer Blonde products. The shampoos, conditioners and styling products (from £3.95 at Boots stores nationwide) are suitable for dyed and natural blondes, smell fresh and botanical, and really do tone down brassiness. The downside is that you need to keep using them to enjoy the effects and, at these prices, it could become an expensive habit.

RHIANNON BATTEN

هكذا من القليل

BEST

Baby, we have designs on you

In the post-pram age, it's hard to know what accessories to buy to make life with a small child that little bit easier. Six top women designers wax lyrical about the products which they found made child-rearing a positive pleasure. By Katy Guest



HELEN STOREY



LIZZIE JOHNSON



ORIANNA FIELDING BANKS



DINNY HALL



DEBORAH CARTER



and RACHEL BULL

Lizzie Johnson
Johnson Banks Design
"The Anywayup Cup from V & A Marketing Ltd is a great invention. It automatically seals between sips, so no leaks or spills even when shaken or dropped. It has won several awards, including being named by the Design Council as a Millennium Product. Another inspired idea which I have recently discovered is the Dishwasher Basket. It takes life's little necessities such as teats, lids, etc and houses them in a basket preventing loss, clogged filters or glued-up heating elements. I would also like to nominate Tip-tronic Transmission. Automatic cars are handy when a crisis develops in the back seat such as a dropped rattle, biscuit, box of raisins, etc. With tip-tronic transmission you can just switch from manual to automatic and back again while driving along and allow yourself the luxury of a spare hand whenever you need it, while still feeling like a racing driver. Another favourite is Betty Crocker's Chocolate Fudge Brownie Mix. All you need in addition to the packet is some water, vegetable oil and a medium egg. They are divine and our two-year-old son Joe (in the photo with me) is already an expert."



Mary Wiggin
Managing Director, Coexistence
Having consulted her daughter, Rachel Bull, Mary named three invaluable additions to her lives: Zanotta's Scangai Clothes Stand can be used as a fun alternative to a wardrobe and the Sacco bean bag, also by Zanotta, is a safe and attractive piece of furniture for children's bedrooms. Seven-year-old Rachel also nominated Baleri Italia's Tata, Tatino and Tatone floor cushions (egg-shaped, ball-shaped and flat, respectively), which have seen her through her stylish childhood."

Orianna Fielding Banks
Designer, Pure Contemporary Design
Orianna thinks that the most perfectly designed product for small children is the "Eat Me, Drink Me" range of tableware, available from Urban Outfitters. At the bottom of these transparent, perspex utensils is printed the perfect incentive for young children to finish their meals, and Orianna's adult friends all seem to love them, too."

Deborah Carter
Designer, Dragon International
"Lego has always been my favourite (I loved it when I was a child) for the following reasons: it is brilliant for imaginative and creative play; easy to store; a very acceptable reasonably-priced present, cleverly targeted with different levels of complexity for a range of ages from five to teens (Duplo fits the younger age group); appeals to both boys and girls, and keeps (most) children occupied for hours. I have also just discovered Yoplait."

Frubes, Fruit Fromage Frais in tubes, introduced by Yoplait to the UK from France a few years ago, which provide real dairy goodness in a portable, convenient and fun format. They are a perfect balance of child appeal and mum reassurance, a good solution for the lunch box and easily stored in the fridge (and freezer too).
The Rosamit Twingo (sadly not yet available in the UK), although not specifically designed with children in mind, is wonderful as a car for a mum because it is convenient to park, comfortable to sit in and has wide doors for getting the kids/shopping/luggage in and out easily; it looks stylish and intrinsically French, with a sense of humour and great attention to detail; it is also very economical to run and feels safe and reliable to drive about in.

Finally, I mustn't forget the Spot the Dog story books. The Spot character is friendly and lovable with a touch of mischief. They offer a great balance of simplicity, charm and fun - a pleasure to read and easy for children and adults to enjoy. The "Spots" offer a surprise element which used to make my children chuckle over and over again."

Dinny Hall
Designer @ Dinny Hall
"I have to say that the best-designed products for babies are at Baby Gap. I was in there all the time for clothes for my son Loran. The socks, the hats, everything is cool and not overpriced. As for pushchairs, the fantastic Pegasus, all-terrain, 3-wheeler boggy is great, but I was never prepared to spend £400 on one."

Clockwise from bottom left: Zanotta Scangai Clothes Stand, available from Coexistence, London N1 (0171-354 8817); The Anywayup Cup is designed by V&A Marketing Ltd (01222 575600). For details of other Millennium Products contact the Design Council on 0171-420 5200. The iMac is available in strawberry, blueberry, grape, tangerine and lime. Customer enquiry line 0870 6006010; similar Baby Gap cardigans are available in the BabyLuxe range. Call 0800 427789 for stockists; the Pegasus Landrover Pushchair costs £392 including accessories. Call 01822 618077 for details or see www.allterrain.co.uk. The Mothercare Manhattan 3-wheeler pushchair retails at £199, customer enquiries 01923 210210; Sacco bean bags by Zanotta are available from Coexistence as before. Not pictured: Frubes were designed by an all-female team and are currently available from supermarkets; the Eat Me, Drink Me range of tableware is available from Urban Outfitters, London W11 (call 0171-761 1001)

Helen Storey
Fashion Designer
"I can think of a well-designed product which is currently keeping my 13-year-old son Luke very happy. It is the iMac. Luke has five "e-mail pals" from America, South Africa, Malaysia and Singapore. His generation is so fear-free of technology, and although I don't let him stay on it for long he is gaining instant knowledge of how other kids his age live their very different lives all around the world. The immediacy of the medium means that he can swap interests and develop an understanding of technology and communication which was impossible in my day."



All done for the love of logos

Companies take trademarks very seriously - just look at how much they spend on them. By Chris Hirst

AT THEIR best, logos are welcome friends, like the sight of the London Transport roundel indicating a tube station on a dark and dubious street. Virtually unchanged since 1933, Edward Johnston's design classic will make its latest appearance on the six new underground stations of the £2.2bn Jubilee Line extension.

On the other hand, logos can arouse intense animosity. The high streets of Britain were scarcely enhanced when the Midland Bank replaced its familiar griffin with the red and white lozenge of its current owner, the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. This spiky motif was adopted from HSBC's towering headquarters in Hong Kong. Sir Norman Foster's design, which aroused the disapproval of the island's feng shui experts, is an unlikely symbol of fiscal prudence since it is said to be the most expensive building ever constructed.

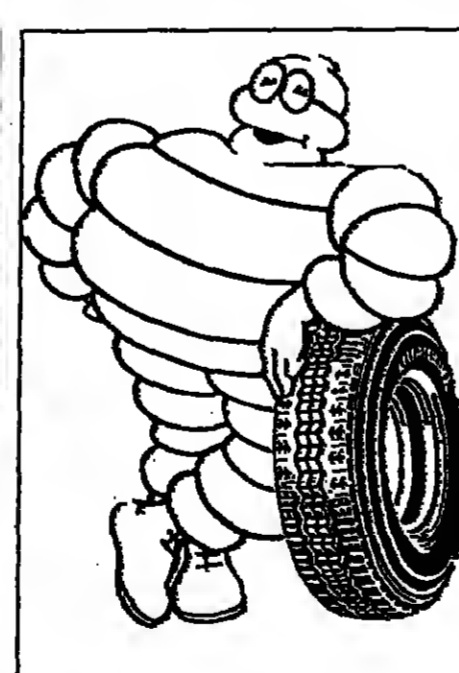
Understandably, institutions place great importance on symbols of corporate identity. Unfortunately, they often get it wrong. Few of BT's millions of customers can have warmed to BT's blue and red piper sign. This curiously fey figure, known colloquially as "man drinking a yard of ale", was a central element in the company's £50m redesign in 1981. This wispy, stylised figure is curiously similar to the logos of the main UK political parties. At a distance, the stylised red rose of New Labour could be mistaken for the red and blue Tory torch, which in turn resembles the flame-like wings of the Lib Dem's yellow bird symbol. Going by their web-sites, however, we can see that the real logos of the parties are the leaders, whose features loom over the weedy symbols. The



Heraldic: EIR postbox logo

slow revelation of William Hague's Melon-like dome is a particularly disturbing experience. The fact that institutions tend to think alike about trademarks is revealed in *Marks of Excellence*, Per Mollerup's visually appealing, but stodgily written, exploration of logos, which has just been re-issued in paperback (Phaidon, £22.95). His taxonomy draws together those companies which, for example, use birds, flags and crowns as their symbols. Dogs are particularly popular: Greyhound buses, BMW records, the bulldog of Mack Trucks, the cartoon hound on Niceday stationery and, most appropriate of all, the Scottie with wagging tail formed by the letters "Spratts." Other animal symbols range from the leaping cat on Slazenger rackets and the dromedary on Camel cigarettes, to the Qantas kangaroo and the Lacoste crocodile. (A tennis champ of the Twenties, Jean-René Lacoste, was nicknamed "The Crocodile".)

Logos in the form of handwriting include Coca-Cola, Ford and Harrods.



Michelin Man, almost unchanged since 1938; the Shell scallop



the Shell scallop

Mollerup notes that the Paul Smith signature which appears on the designer's label is not what appears on Mr Smith's cheques. But he fails to point out that arguably the most famous "signature" of all, the Walt Disney logo, was not the work of the eponymous film producer. Companies whose logos make striking use of initials include Volkswagen, McDonalds, Rolls-Royce, and the burgeoning retail chain whose name commemorates the initials of its Swedish founder, Ingmar Kamprad (Elmargard Agnarmard).

Some trademarks have not strayed far from their heraldic origins,

needs to be adjusted to meet changing conditions". Presumably, that's why we've lost the green gherkin and "57 varieties" from Heinz products and the clock from Crosse & Blackwell. Fortunately, Tate & Lyle had the good sense not to tamper with its tins of golden syrup, which still bear the quotation "Out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Judges 13:9) illustrated by a decaying lion corpse and swarm of bees. Though much modified, the Camp Coffee label still boasts its tartan-clad defender of the Raj. In retrospect, however, the US detergent giant Procter & Gamble may wish it had updated its "man in the moon" logo, which first appeared in 1886, before a gaggle of paranoid conspiracy-hunters, denounced the trademark as a sign of corporate satanism.

Mollerup notes that the Shell scallop "would hardly be recognised as a shell if the company did not carry the name." In fact, this carefully guarded symbol looks more like a sun-rise in its latest formulation. But such simplification is not always the rule. After modernising the label, Colman's quietly re-introduced a horned bull's head on its mustard a few years ago.

The Michelin man, one of the most famous of all trademarks, has scarcely changed since 1938. The founding Michelin brothers got the idea of Bibendum from a stack of tyres at a trade show. Drawn by the poster artist O'Galop, this cheery endomorph continues to humanise the image of the tyre company in a humorous way. But I doubt if the woman whom I once saw being chased down Brixton High Street by a man in a Bibendum costume feels very warmly towards the trademark.

DESIGN LINES

THIS IS the story of how some old hand-blown glass jars became this season's hottest design accessory.

The jars in question started life as storage containers in Kew Gardens' herbarium - a collection of some 6.5 million dried specimens ranging from tassel seed to opium poppy, and all manner of pods, roots, barks, twigs and other plant bits. They were gathered from all round the world on some of the most famous plant-hunting expeditions of the last two centuries. Each jar was labelled in brown ink and italic script with its contents, the date and its provenance. Tens of thousands of jars formed the reserve collection; many had lived at the garden's museum since it opened in 1857.

Three years ago, however, there was a crisis. Kew's three museums designed by Decimus Burton had fallen into a dismal state, and even Museum No 1 had been closed for 10 years. The award of a £1.4m Heritage Lottery Fund grant to repair it was met with great rejoicing, but for the reserve collection it was a death knell. While one museum was to be kept with its historic furnishings intact, the other two were to be refitted and decked with bright, interactive displays; there would be no room for dull old duplicates.

The jars were therefore offered to every museum in Britain, but no one wanted or more to the point - had room for them. Kew would like to have kept them as a collection, but with the work on the jars' building about to begin, it was forced to sell them to the highest bidder. This turned out to be Lasso, the London Architectural Salvage Supply



The Kew jars

Company. The original 9ft-high Decimus Burton display cases were similarly dispatched. The samples were removed from the specimen jars and the precise wording of their labels was catalogued.

At which point enter Maureen Docherty, whose Knightsbridge mews shop, Egg, purveys a mix of beautifully made clothes in ravishing fabrics, studio ceramics and designer objects. Maureen wandered into Lasso one day, and emerged three hours later the possessor of several hundred hauntingly empty jars. Hence next week's exhibition.

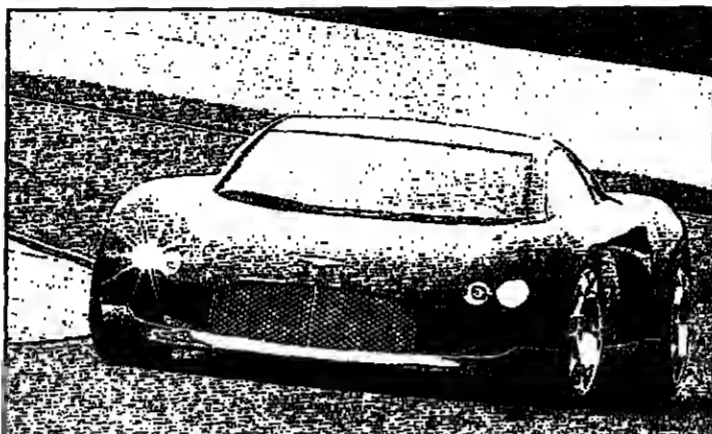
Maureen enthuses about the beauty of these botanic mementoes, with their cork lids intact and poignant original hand- and typewritten labels. They are as singular as one-off pieces of studio glass or pottery, and a tenth of the price (from £15 to £40). "I think they're mad at Kew," she says cheerfully. "They should have kept them all and sold them in their own shop." And there's the rub. Such historic relics may be of little interest to museums, but they make wonderfully fashionable and curious objects of desire.

ANNABEL FREYBERG

"Kew Jars" runs 16 to 30 March at Egg, 36 Kinnerton Street, London SW1X 8ES (0171-235 9315)

Four ways forward

The Geneva Motor Show offers glimpses of the future. By **John Simister**



Clockwise from top left: Bentley's 8.0-litre Hunaudieres with 16-cylinder engine producing 623bhp; Vauxhall's angled speedster, made of bonded aluminium; Citroën's curvy C6 concept car; and the Renault Avantime, which will be out next; March

Every motor show has its concept cars. Often they are just showing-off exercises to test the world's reaction to new ideas. But at the Goevoa Motor Show, which opened last Tuesday, concepts from Opel/Vauxhall, Renault and Toyota pointed to real cars for the next millennium.

Alternatively, there was the Bentley. Imagine a mid-engined supercar, something like a Lamborghini Diablo, with a metal-meshed put-out in the front shaped like a Bentley's radiator grille. It's the Bentley Hunaudieres, named after the restaurant half-way down the Mulsanne Straight at the Le Mans race track, scene of famous Bentley race victories in the late Twenties.

Volkswagen, which now owns Bentley, believes the marque should race at Le Mans again. So are the Germans messing around with precious British heritage? No, says Rolls-Royce and Bentley product development director Roh Oldaker.

"The first ideas came before VW ownership, and last July we talked with Volkswagen about moving it forward. It was the right thing to do for this show."

The design might be Bentley-flavoured, and the 8.0-litre, 16-cylinder, 623bhp engine might be Bentley-tuned for effortless thrust rather than race-car pace, but the car was built in Germany using the chassis of another VW Group product—the Diablo. And the W16 engine is four-thirds of the W12 unit seen in Volkswagen's own supercar study a year ago. The Humanaïres is an intriguing idea, but the notion of an engine behind the occupants seems deeply odd in a Bentley.

And so to relative reality. Lotus reinvented the stripped-out, pure-pleasure sports car with the Elise, and two big-name makers are now chasing Lotus. Opel, or Vauxhall as it's called here, is even basing its angular Speedster on the Elise's hooded-aluminium chassis, but power comes from a Vauxhall engine of 2.2 litres and 147bhp. The driving experience won't be

as extreme as the Elise's, but engineering chief Peter Hanenberger promises he "won't put in too much comfort". Vauxhall's first sportster since the Twenties goes on sale next July. VW-owned Seat's interpretation of the idea, styled mainly by Julian Thomson who also shaped the Elise, is less certain for production, but the will is there.

Opel/Vauxhall also showed "Concept A," a cuboid with a rounded nose and a price less than a Corsa's. This van-like vehicle with four fold-flat seats uses the doors and centre section from GM-affiliate Suzuki's Wagon-R. "This is the first time in Europe that anyone has done such a car," says Hanenberger. "If we had just made a smaller Corsa, then we might not gain so many sales." It will be launched next spring.

Toyota's cute Yaris supermini has just gone on sale, and Geneva saw a mini-MPV version called Verso. It's slightly larger than Concept A, and Toyota hasn't yet decided whether to sell it here. Also rooted in MPVs, but intended as a new concept in grand touring, is the Renault

Avantime. Imagine an Espace coupé with a hi-tech but discreet interior, and you'll get the idea. Made by Matra, like the Espace, the Avantime is Renault's alternative to big, prestigious German saloons. You can buy something similar from next March.

Citroën's C6 signalled further confidence in the once-moribund notion of a French prestige car. It's a study for a possible XM or Xantia replacement, which looks individually like a Citroën without resort to pastiche. "Retro is a dead-end street," declares design chief Art Blakeslee. It is a beautiful, curvy thing. So are Aston Martin's V12-engined DB7 Vantage and Ferrari's aluminium-structured, 360 Modena, proper production cars and Geneva debutantes both.

At the other aesthetic extreme is Mitsubishi's Pajero Pinin, a sort of mini-Shogun part-styled by Pininfarina, which will build it in Italy. It comes either toggled-up for off-roading or smoothed-off for urban crawling. Someone once said something about form following function, but this isn't quite what was meant.

The world's best saloon

Its stunning looks, superb handling and amazing technology makes the Mercedes S-class unbeatable. By John Simister



The new Mercedes S-class is leaner and lighter

ROAD TEST

the front seats have built-in fans to cool you through perforations in the leather; they would also have a built-in massaging service which inflates and deflates different parts of the seat in turn. And, from the summer, there will be a "Keyless Go" system which reads a smart card and unlocks the car as you touch the handle. Once inside, touch the gear selector and the engine starts.

Or try "Distronic" cruise control, which automatically keeps you a safe distance from the car in front unless you want to pass it.

But if you think you can manage without all this, except maybe some parts of the computer and stereo and a merely normal dose of electronic ysterbism, you can enjoy the opposite end of S-class travel. The S280, a 2.8-litre-chassis version with 105 bhp for £43,640, and an S320 for £49,140. And, if you're likely to motor away from motorways and city centres, they give the most pleasing drive of all. Size, or the lack of it, still matters, and the smaller versions of the new, smaller S-classes do things their bigger relatives cannot.

with moving such a beast? It can, rather well, although the 2.8 might struggle. The V6 is a creamy engine, delivering creamy progress through a creamily-shifting automatic transmission. That transmission features a "one-touch" manual mode, similar to the Tiptronic type. Manual overrides seen on other German cars, but instead of pushing the lever forwards or pulling it back, the Mercedes system has you nudge it to one side or the other. It's completely counter-intuitive, which is surprising in a car otherwise so logically conceived.

Fortunately it's also unnecessary, even when you're tackling a fast but bumpy road. And that is where the S330, more than the bigger S-classes, excels. All credit to the air-sprung electronic suspension and the super-rigid body structure: It's as agile as a BMW 3-series, changing direction with an ease astonishing in something so apparently bulky.

And your passengers, luxuriating in their individually-controlled climate zones, will barely notice your efforts, cocooned as they are by wood and leather and soothing curves and a pervasive aura of last-forever solidity, not to mention eight airbags.

No other full-on luxury car feels quite as complete, as integrated, as harmonious as the big Benz. The technology is impressive, but the way it looks and feels is what makes it such a desirable object, that makes it the best saloon car in the world. DaimlerChrysler, as the parent company is now called, expects to have half of the world's luxury-car sales to itself. That night follows day is a similarly safe bet.

SPECIFICATIONS

RIVALS

Make and model: Mercedes-Benz S320.
Price: £49,140.
Engine: 3,199cc, V6, 18 valves, 224bhp at 5,600rpm, 110bhp at 4,000rpm.
Transmission: five-speed auto gearbox, rear-wheel drive.
Performance: 149mph, 0-60 in 8.0 seconds, 20-25mpg.

RIVALS

Audi A8 3.7: £43,995. Mercedes contains lots of aluminium, but the Audi is virtually made of it. Lithe, elegant and recently revised, it has not achieved the credibility it really deserves.

BMW 735i: £44,960.
Beautifully built car which is high on gizmology, but the big BMW is strangely short of personality.

Jaguar XJ8 3.2: £36,405.
Britain's contribution seems a bargain in this company, but lacks space and modernity. It's a great drive, though.

MOTORING

TEL: 0171 293 2222

FAX: 0171 293 2505

[illegible][illegible]

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

BY FIONA STURGES

<div> EXCELLENT GOOD OK POOR DEADLY </div>				
OVERVIEW	CRITICAL VIEW		OUR VIEW	ON VIEW
THE FILM PLEASANTVILLE <p>Gary Ross's directorial debut sees a pair of teenagers (Reese Witherspoon and Tobey Maguire) transported to a wholesome black-and-white Fifties sitcom.</p>	<p>"A technical marvel, enlivened by a smart script, great visual jokes and a handful of fantastic performances... But," wrote Anthony Quinn, "its thinking is confused and faintly patronising." "Technically superb, but dazed and confused," decided the <i>Daily Mail</i>, while the <i>Financial Times</i> deemed it: "Pleasant but predictable." "An imaginative, ingenious fable," wrote <i>Time Out</i>. "An ingenious fable," echoed <i>The Times</i>. "The parallel-dimension concept is larkily executed, although if you've seen <i>The Truman Show</i>, you'll have the paradoxes down pat," noted <i>The Guardian</i>. "Its concepts are just slightly undigested and shoe-horned in," rumbled <i>The Big Issue</i>.</p>		<p>Ross's feature debut is a technical masterpiece and makes a playful spoof of American family values, though its moral standpoint is occasionally confused and condescending.</p>	<p><i>Pleasantville</i> is out on general release, certificate 15, 124 minutes.</p>
THE PLAY SPEER <p>The Austrian actor Klaus Maria Brandauer directs and stars in Esther Villar's biographical study of Albert Speer, Hitler's architect and minister for war.</p>	<p>"The strength of <i>Speer</i> lies in the scrupulous, magnetic performances. Both actors are supremely relaxed," noted Paul Taylor. "Skillfully directed by Brandauer, <i>Speer</i> remains a compelling drama about one of the most enigmatic figures in 20th-century history," intoned <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>. "Both the author and Brandauer himself must be applauded for having hired one of the few living men capable of performing beside this fascinating model and somehow upstaging it," sang <i>The Times</i>. "I struggled to keep my mind on it and even... to stay awake," confessed the <i>Financial Times</i>. The <i>Daily Mail</i> pronounced it: "Riveting but misleading."</p>		<p>The controlled formality of Sven Eric Bechtloff's <i>Bauer</i> is more than matched by Brandauer, whose eerily meticulous <i>Speer</i> almost single-handedly carries the play.</p>	<p><i>Speer</i> is at the Almeida Theatre, London, N1 until 27 March. For bookings and enquiries, call 0171-359 4404.</p>
THE ALBUM BLUR <p>Essex mockney Damon Albarn bemoans the demise of his relationship with Elastica's Justine Frischmann in <i>Blur's</i> sixth album, <i>13</i>, featuring the hit single "Tender".</p>	<p>"Blur's sixth album is a grower," declared Andy Gill. "On first hearing it sounds rough and unfocused, but with each subsequent encounter its character becomes more clearly defined." "How is Noel Gallagher going to top this?" inquired <i>The Guardian</i>, adding, "This album shows Blur to be more inventive, artistic and daring than their erstwhile rivals could ever hope to be." "Constantly surprising and extraordinarily inventive," thrilled <i>The Times</i>. "A baffling betrayal of Blur's genius," whinged the <i>Daily Mail</i>. "While <i>13</i> reveals a band operating at new levels of creativity, some hard-but-fair prying would have improved its demeanour," wrote the <i>NME</i>.</p>		<p>Albarn may have been unlucky in love, but his kiss is our gain. With <i>13</i>, Blur have transcended their Britpop status and come up with their most inventive and courageous album to date.</p>	<p><i>Blur's 13</i> (Food) will be available in record shops on Monday.</p>
THE EXHIBITION JACKSON POLLOCK <p>The Tate Gallery hosts a retrospective of the US Abstract Expressionist artist Jackson Pollock - aka "Jack the Dripper" after his famous "drip" paintings.</p>	<p>"It offers inexhaustible interest to the eye. It can be contemplated endlessly. And if you're content for that, to be what painting does, you can hardly ask for more," considered Tom Lubbock. "A brilliant experience," sang <i>The Guardian</i>. "Pollock appears embroiled in a life-or-death struggle to convey his urgent vision of the world," gasped <i>The Times</i>, but according to the <i>Daily Mail</i>, "When you have seen one massive canvas of splash, dribble and smear, you have seen them all." "Be prepared for the best and the worst of Pollock," warned <i>The Guardian</i>, while the <i>Daily Telegraph</i> admitted: "The first couple of galleries are heavy going."</p>		<p>Following the trajectory of Pollock's career is an extraordinary spectacle which explodes before your very eyes as he abandons the paintbrush in favour of the "drip" paintings.</p>	<p>Jackson Pollock is at the Tate Gallery until 6 June. For bookings and enquiries call 0171-887 8000.</p>
THE TV PROGRAMME ITN EARLY EVENING NEWS <p>Having bid an emotional farewell to the flagship <i>News at Ten</i>, Trevor McDonald introduces ITN's re-ramped news programmes at 6.30pm and later at 11pm.</p>	<p>"The innovations consisted of a new, more spacious look to the studio, and rotating computer graphics, with the kind of rotating globe that the satirical TV programme <i>The Day Today</i> poked fun at," reported Robert Hanks, adding, "Apart from that it was business as usual." "Those waiting for the rot to set in will, I'm afraid, have to wait a while yet," chirped <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>. "Same theme music, jazzed up a bit. Same fatuous backdrop between presenter and reporter," snapped <i>The Daily Mirror</i>. The <i>Spectator</i> noted: "Bright, good-looking people wandering around a set full of virtual visual aids and, presumably some real ones too."</p>		<p>Apart from a few cosmetic improvements and the extraordinary sight of Trevor McDonald walking around, the new programme is indistinguishable from the last.</p>	<p>You can watch the ITN Early Evening News at 6.30pm and the ITN Nightly News at 11pm. Both programmes are on Monday to Friday.</p>

EXIT POLL

VISUAL ARTS
JACKSON POLLOCK
TATE GALLERY, LONDON

JACK COLLINS
74, retired,
Plymouth

"It is so different from anything I have seen before. I loved the idea of it being uniform as well as abstract; it looks like a pattern that you could never copy. There is such tremendous detail in these paintings, and the sheer amount of work is very impressive. He also used a complicated combination of colours."



PATRICK KIKER
35, student, Boston

"I loved it. I thought his work was particularly good towards the end of his life, during what he called his 'black period', when he left splatter art. I enjoyed seeing his experimentation with unconscious imagery, which was a big theme for him, and I thought that these works took him to a new level. A great artist should never be looked into a style that he has created."



RUTH BROWN
14, student, Dorset

"It's very different from what I usually think of as art; it's simple, playful and unorganised. I didn't really understand the names he gave the paintings, because I saw different things in the pictures. His compositions are crazy. I would recommend it."



GEORGINE ANDERSON
70, actor, London

"I thought it was absolutely superb. I could get lost in his paintings. The exhibition mentions Pollock's excellent response when someone once asked him why he didn't paint landscapes - he said: 'I am the landscape.' I think this is very true. When you look at his paintings you feel as if it's part of him is right in there. I also found it interesting to learn about his struggle to create, and to communicate."



A careful ripple of a storm

RICHARD ALSTON is a choreographer's choreographer. He creates a plotless fabric of dance, with consummately crafted movement that dips and weaves on the energy of the music and sections the air with bold curves and lines. His facility is like an engine, chugging out an inexhaustible variety of images. Yet within this enormous range, the contrasts and modulations are understated, filtered through the stylisation of his language. An emotional storm for Richard Alston is, for me, a careful ripple.

Slow Airs Almost All of Them is his new piece for the Richard Alston Dance Company. Using Mozart's *Six Adagios and Fugues for String Trio* (played by the group string quartet on stage), he considers the adagios to be the heart of the music. These allow him to deploy his predilection for...

DANCE

RICHARD ALSTON
DANCE COMPANY
QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL
SOUTH BANK CENTRE
LONDON

eerily lyrical duets, and the final one exem...ties his smooth manipulation of slotting shapes, closing with a duplicate pose of one body identically folded over the other. But Alston's writing to the fugues (which Mozart derived from Bach) also has a graphic freshness, so that when he brings on the cast's four women he shows them as a tight, unexpected frieze, their backs turned to the audience. Cleverly he choreographs overlaps, causing the dance to continue in the

silences between the musical passages. The surprise effect of this jolts you into seeing the movement even more acutely.

The musical delight of live players and singers continues with the rest of the programme. Alston's 1994 *Movements from Petruska* takes Stravinsky's piano arrangement of his original ballet score and, for the first time in London, puts the piano centre stage. Richard Casey's 10 fingers are enough to cope, the dancers circle round him and Christopher Tudor leaps and rolls, an echo of Fokine's tragic puppet. But what really makes the piece is the music or the movement? The performing style, too softened for the jagged rhythms, weakens the choreography's impact.

The dancers' deliberately gentle outlines, avoiding muscular tension,

look right in last year's *Waltzes in Disorder*, to Brahms's song cycle, *Liebster-Edel-Walzer*. Christopher Tudor breaks away from his relationship with a woman for the freedom symbolised by Martin Lawrence's man-bird. The threading-through of a theme helps the piece avoid the sense of probability which can sometimes blight Alston's pieces.

Watching an Alston programme I find myself redoubling my admiration for him, but as the evening progresses he offers me diminishing returns. Perhaps it is because he articulates his choreographic contrasts with such restraint, perhaps because the pacing is so smooth and language so tastefully beautiful. I know I am watching different things, but it all tends to feed the same.

NADINE MEISNER



Alston's 'Slow Airs Almost All of Them' offers diminishing returns

So good they named it twice

THE "FOREIGN film" screening on Wednesday night was not a broad Italian comedy, or a nasty French farce. It was *The Acid House*, based on Irvine Welsh's short stories of Scottish lowlife, replete with American subtitles. "Slag" was still "slag" in this American-speaking translation. But "watching *Coronation Street*" read as "watching TV", and "wee bird" appeared on the screen as "girlfriend". The *Acid House* opened the Sixth Annual New York Underground Film Festival, and before the screening ended, Manhattanites in the darkened theatre could be heard repeating the film's phrases after reading them.

"You stooping slag," said one fellow in a booming New York accent. "You daft sow!" replied his friend. True to its name, the Under-

ground Festival is larded with pustulant 16mm shorts (*Bite My Boonknus*), wacky documentaries (portrait of an obese champion hot-dog eater), and videos such as *10 Beers in 10 Minutes* (promoted as "Andy Warhol meets *Animal House*"). The *Acid House* was the slickest, attended by the festival's usual ageing youth-cultured crowd, in regulation black and, of course, with grey circles beneath the eyes.

These cineastes, primed for four days of films that range from under-edited to unedited, might probably have suffered *The Acid House* untranslated. Other US audiences probably won't be as willing, though.

"It would be impossible to release it without subtitles," says Emily Russo, of the film's American distributor, Zeitgeist Films. "There's

NEW YORK DIARY



ALISSA QUART

a lot of slang in it that was translated into American slang. Honestly, I didn't know what 'ken' and 'bairn' meant without the translation. And the film uses a lot of strong, objectionable language - the subtitling really puts that

language out there."

Artisan Entertainment, the distributor of Ken Loach's *My Name is Joe*, took a similar tack, translating that film's supposedly intractable Glaswegian dialogue for US viewers. (Loach's 1990 film *Riff-Raff* was also subtitled.) US critics had said the film was of a "genre that's hard on American ears" and harder to listen to than reading French subtitles. The *New York Times* went so far as to thank Artisan for subtitles that broke the "burr-and-brogue barrier". According to Bing Wong, marketing director of CPV, a New York-based

company and dubbing company, his company has also subtitled Irish TV and industrial videos for Americans "because the accented speech can be fast and the phrases are unclear". Despite these claims of the indecipherability of the kitchen sink - an inverse of America's passion for *Shakespeare in Love*'s voices - ordinary New York viewers of *My Name is Joe* didn't seem to need the titles. After *The Acid House*, the festival's audience headed out of the theatre into a cold, clear evening, and perhaps a late-night festival party at the Irvine-Welsh-appropriate East Village pharmacy theme bar, Barmacy. They carried festival programmes that urged them to forgo the "mollycoddling shopping-mall mentality" of independent film. "See you in Hell!" the notes exalted. "I was happy for those subtitles," said one festival-goer. "Oh, I didn't really need them," said another. "But I had read the book."

"Never trust anything called 'underground,'" mumbled a third. There was still more gloom in the Meridian Feature - Los Angeles: *City of Mirrors* (World Service, Monday). Christopher Fraying-Journeved through the paranoid city asking what had gone wrong in this paradise of wide open spaces and sunshine. "People choose to be bad," suggested the film director Carl Franklin. "The garbage is fantastic in Beverly Hills," countered the film director Paul Mazursky. Another film director, Lawrence Kasdan, talked of a sort of not that connects everybody together, so that no one can get out. Fraying-Journeved talked only to film directors, though. There was also a guy who had a big cowboy voice and spoke of Los Angeles as an oasis city. He sounded as though he'd just arrived by horse.

"Kevin Stern," he said, introducing himself. "California State Librarian."

THE WEEK IN RADIO



MAGNUS MILLS

that blue whales can navigate the entire Atlantic Ocean through sound resonance, while honey-bees are capable of calibrating the sun, moon and stars. Next week he moves on to human beings, whose maps are generally less accurate.

If you place two strangers in a wilderness, then more than likely they will be drawn towards one another. Whether this could be to their mutual advantage, or not, was the subject of *In the Solitude of the Cotton Fields* (Radio 3, Sunday), a play about two men making a deal in a deserted warehouse. Conditions seem perfect: the dealer has something to sell, and the client has something he needs. Yet however close they come to completing their business, they are prevented from doing so by distrust and vanity. Instead, they circle and peck at each other like birds in the darkness.

Russell Dixon and Gerard McSorley gave taut performances in this radio version of Bernard-Marie Koltès's masterpiece, which concluded that commerce is the most melancholic of things.

AT THE height of the Mau Mau emergency in Kenya in the Fifties, one of the most dreaded sounds was the call of the reed-bark horn. Its tones were enough to invoke the sacred oaths sworn by some Kikuyu farm workers, and obliged them to kill their white masters. The *Archive Hour: Death in the Bush* (Radio 4, Saturday) gave an account of the terror that lurked after dark when so-called "oathless gangs" secretly operated against the settlers.

On isolated estates, lone English women defended themselves with revolvers as they tried to listen to the BBC World Service. In Kikuyu villages, loyal employees received "punishment" visits late at night. Meanwhile, Nairobi politicians tried to find peace in their time.

The story was told with the use of recorded material carefully juxtaposed, so that the voices of long-dead Mau Mau leaders spoke beside those of the retired policemen who'd spent years trying to round them up. All that was missing from the menacing atmosphere was the stridulation of insects at the margins of the forest.

For there are insects everywhere, especially ants. In *Mapping the World* (World Service, Wednesday) an American scientist explained the march of ants across the Earth's surface, how ants in their millions leave chemical trails to help them find their way, and how ants therefore never get lost.

Another American scientist talked almost poetically of "the consciousness of bacteria", a reference to the way even the simplest organisms always know where they're going. Nick Rankin's programme about biological mapping demonstrated

ARTS DIARY

DAVID LISTER

IF YOU watch children's television this morning and are stunned by its inanity, then you have a new champion. She is Anne Fine, the children's novelist. She told last weekend's Culture Wars conference that she wanted "to nail the old canard that telly encourages reading. This is a marketing device. Children would read more books if they didn't spend 18 hours a week vegetating in front of the telly."

Worst of all was "the three-hour tide of noisy, senseless drivel that is Saturday-morning TV, with its crass questions to prompt a phone-in". She spoke from experience, having been a guest several times. On each occasion she was told she had received more calls than any other guest. She asked the producers why, then, they didn't have a programme about book authors. No reply.

The children's writer Helen Cresswell recalled adapting E Nesbit's *The Phoenix and the Carpet* for TV. Penguin Books asked her to write a novelisation of it. "But there already is one," she replied. "It's by E Nesbit - and you publish it." They replied that it was too difficult for children.

Did she slam the phone down? No. She started writing. A girl has to eat. And she does, she says, "feel quite guilty about it." I WENT TO

the Jackson Pollock retrospective at the Tate armed with the audio guide narrated by Paul Gambaccini. My copy had a high-pitched, speeded-up Gambaccini. It sent me round the different periods of Pollock at breakneck speed. "Oh dear," said a Tate official when I returned the cassette. "we're not meant to give out that tape." But they should. It is the perfect audio adjunct to *Abstract Expressionism*.

THERE ARE two contenders for this week's Artspeak Award. Jane Horrocks must be nominated, for saying that she is giving up the theatre after playing Lady Macbeth because the play "emotionally highlights the bad things that you're going through in life". It was, of course, the production in which Miss Horrocks had to urinate on stage every night, so maybe it was the combined strain on soul and bladder that drove her to the edge.

But she is pipped at the post by Absa, the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts. On Thursday it changed its name to Arts & Business. "Both the new name and the identity have been generously donated by Interbrand Newell and Sorrell," it said.

We can all get in on this philanthropic artspeak. I hereby donate the name "arts diary" to this column.

